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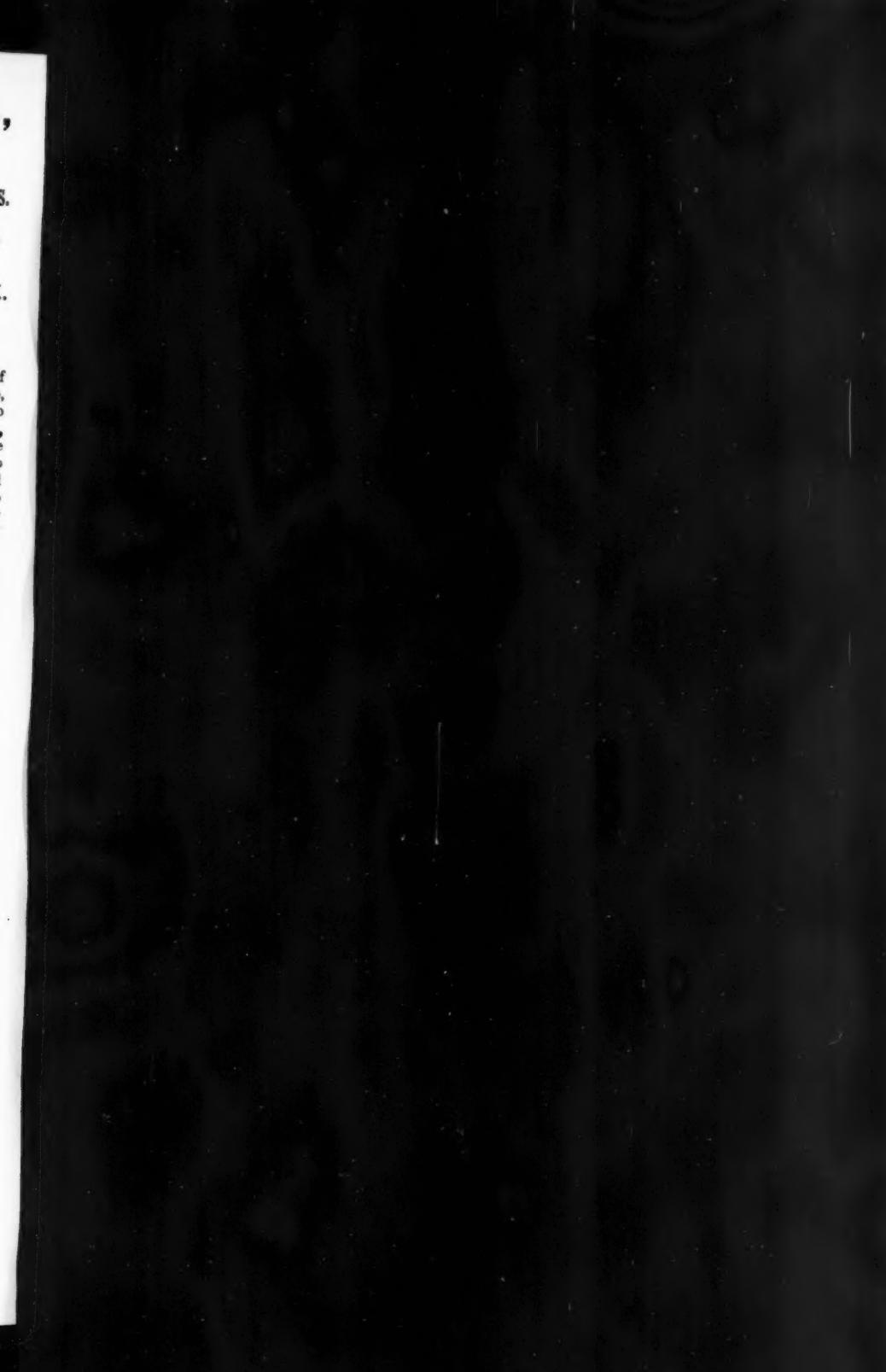
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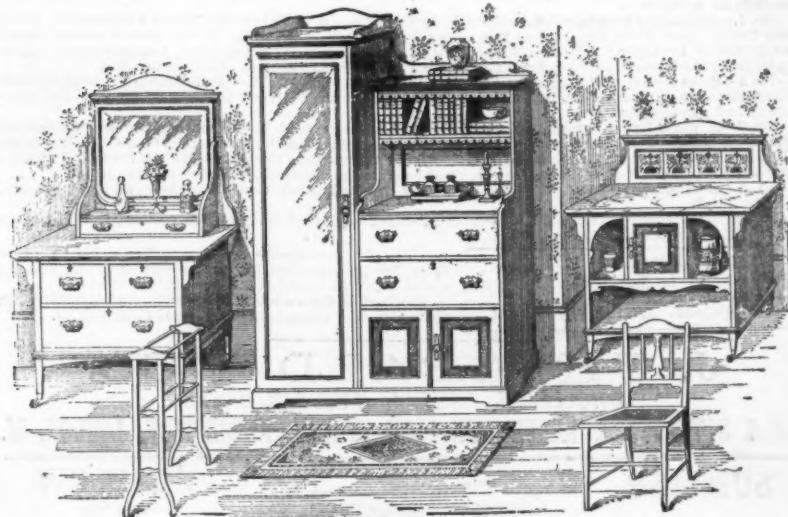
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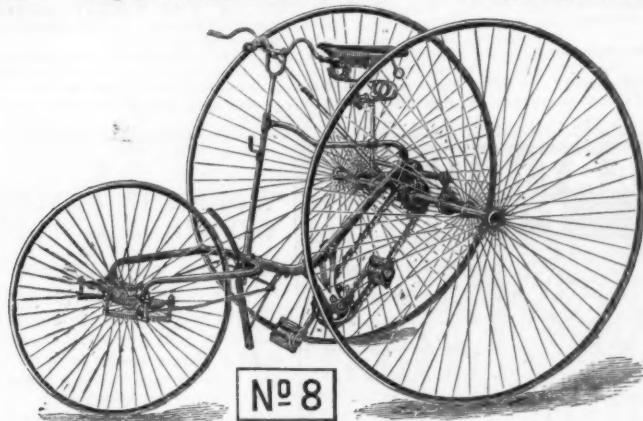
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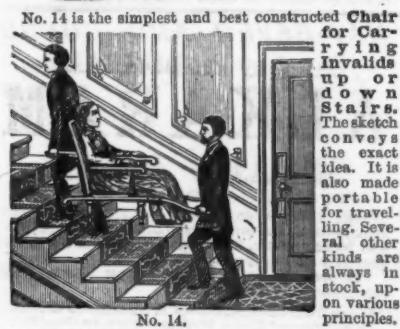
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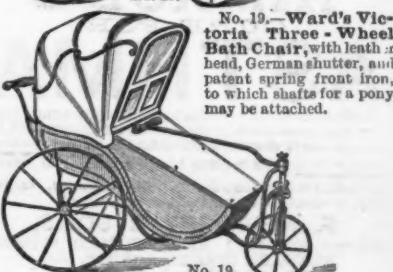


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JUNE 1886.

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WHOLESALE OF THE MANUFACTURERS,

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Children of Gibeon.

BY WALTER BESANT.

BOOK II.

CHAPTER VIII.

LOTTY'S FOOLISH DREAM.

AFTER her two days' rest, Lotty ought in common decency to have shown some signs of improvement, if not of complete recovery. That she did not was only part of the well-known ingratitude of the poor. You may give them a lift over a bad bit, and they go on stumbling into worse bits : the sick woman basely and ungratefully develops more alarming symptoms and the man out of work continues to meet with new disappointments, so that where you began with a helping hand you must either maintain a pensioner or leave your patient in a worse plight than you found him.

I do not think that Lotty meant to be ungrateful ; she would have preferred, I am quite sure, strength to weakness and health to pain, but she did have a very bad night on Sunday, and when on Monday morning Valentine looked in she found the girl in a low way. One bunch of grapes and two days' rest, and a real, not a phantom, dinner on each day, were, you see, insufficient by themselves to meet the case. Valentine thought of what the old man below had said about ladies thinking to set everything right with a few acts of kindness. Even a bunch of hothouse grapes, at four shillings a pound, is not enough to repair the mischief wrought

by eight long years of privation and hard work. Valentine might as well have tried to restore her youth to the old lady on the ground-floor back with a box of violet powder. Acts of kindness are not without their uses, but they cannot actually cure disease.

Lotty was lying on her back, pale and with closed eyes. The two girls were standing by the bedside frightened.

'She's awful bad,' said Lizzie. 'She's been bad all night. It isn't that she's hungry, because yesterday was Sunday and there was a bit of meat. You can speak to her if you like: she isn't asleep.'

'Don't try to speak, Lotty. We will carry you into the other room. It is quieter and the bed is easier. We will all three carry you.' Melenda turned her shoulder with an expressive gesture. 'Melenda, are you so proud that you cannot even bear to see your friend relieved ?'

'Do what you like for her,' said Melenda. Then she burst into tears of jealous rage at her own impotence. 'You sha'n't do anything for me. Oh, Lotty!' she flung her arms over her friend. 'I can't do anything for you, my dear, and I thought I was to do everything. I'm no use to you when you want my use the most. And now you're going to be helped by a stranger.'

Valentine said nothing, and presently Melenda left off crying, and consoled herself by assuming the command in the matter of carrying Lotty.

The other room was certainly quieter and cooler, and the bed was not so hard. And then they sent for the doctor.

It was the same young man who had spoken to Valentine on the Sunday evening. But this morning he seemed rougher in his speech and manner.

'It's been coming,' he said; 'I've seen it coming.'

'What is it?'

'She's got to rest. Don't tell me, you girls, that she can't. Because she's got to, do you hear? and she's got to have good food.'

'Rest and good food!' said Melenda, bitterly. 'Oh, Lord! why don't you say she's got to have oysters and chicken and port wine?'

'Good food!' said Lizzie. But she looked at Valentine.

'Rest and good food,' the doctor repeated, 'and nothing to do for the remainder of her days; and that won't be long,' he added in a lower tone.

'She shall have rest and proper food,' said Valentine.

The sharpest sting of poverty is when you are made to feel

your own impotence to relieve the suffering which wealth can remove : even to avert the death which wealth can stave off. Melenda's eyes flashed, and she made as if she would say something fierce and resentful ; but she restrained herself in the presence of the doctor, though the effort cost her a good deal and the tears sprang to her eyes. 'Come, Liz,' she said, 'we'll go back to work.'

'There's only you and me now,' she said, presently, looking up ; 'Lotty won't come back any more. She won't let her come back. She'll give her grapes and beef and cocoa so that she won't want to come back. She's given her a new petticoat and new stockings already. She'll try to make her hate us just to spite me because I let her have a bit of my mind. Oh, I know for all her meek ways she's a sly one ! If it's good for Lotty'—here she choked. She wished to be loyal to her friend, but it was a bitter thing that she should be taking gifts from anybody but herself. 'You'll go next, I suppose, Liz. Very well then. There'll be only me left. If you want to desert me, take and go and do it. Perhaps she'll give you all your meals if you stoop so low as to take 'em.'

'Don't talk wild, Melenda. Lotty hasn't deserted us. Why can't you be civil to your own sister ? Why shouldn't she help Lotty ? I'm glad she came here—there ! I'm glad she came. Do you hear that ?'

Melenda at other times would have crushed this spirit of revolt, but she was this morning too dejected, and made no reply.

'Desert us ?' Lizzie went on. 'Why shouldn't Lotty desert us, come to that ? What can we give her ? Desert us ? Why, Melenda, it's so miserable that we may just as well desert each other at once, and give up trying.'

Still Melenda made no reply.

'Last night,' Lizzie continued, 'she went and sat with father. Poor old dad ! With him in his rags. Did you ever do that ? And she sang to him, and Saturday all day long she worked for Lotty. You never did more. Desert us ? What could Lotty do better, I should like to know ? Look at this bed and the one she is lying on ; look at this room and the other ; look at her dinner and ours. I re'lly wonder you should talk such nonsense.'

Still Melenda made no reply. She was crushed. Her growing discontent and her newly born knowledge of better things gave Lizzie a spirit which privation could never give her.

In this way, however, Lotty's chains were taken from her.

Day followed day, but she did not rise from the bed. Sometimes Melenda sat beside her, work in hand, gentle with her, though full of resentment against Valentine. Sometimes Lizzie sat with her. Generally it was Valentine who read to her, sang to her, talked to her, and nursed her. There are some women whose mere presence soothes a patient; whose touch drives away pain; whose voice is a sedative; who are the born nurses. Valentine belonged to them.

A little happiness, even if you do have a bad cough with it, and an aching back, and limbs which feel as if they could never move again, is a medicine delightful to take, and sovereign against many evils, especially lines in the forehead, drawn mouth, and worn eyes. Lotty's thin cheeks did not grow any fuller, but they lost something of their waxen pallor, and a faint glow appeared on them as of winter sunshine. Her hollow chest did not grow any deeper, but her shoulders seemed less contracted. Her eyes were not so weary, and on her thin lips there presently appeared once more the old smile which she had lost about the time when her father went bankrupt, and her mother went mad, and her sister said she wouldn't stand it any longer. She would never get any better; she knew this somehow, but it is not hard, when one has had so long a spell of work, just to lie passive, though the days which slip by so quickly bring death so very near. Less hard still is it when one has such a nurse as Valentine, and a doctor, who comes every day with something to charm away the aching, and for the first time, after many a long year, dainty and sufficient food. Presently sweet and pleasant thoughts began to linger in her brain; they were thoughts that came to her while Valentine read and sang. The spectre of Famine, with her dreadful uplifted scourge of scorpions, had vanished. She was no longer driven to try, if only for half an hour, to hold the shirts and make the button-holes. She was no longer anxious for the future; though there was no more work for her to do, she should not starve. Valentine was with her: she could close her eyes in peace and sleep without dreaming of an empty shelf in the morning. Is it possible for us, the overfed sons and daughters of a luxurious *bourgeoisie*, our eyes swelling out for fatness, who have never known a single day without its three abundant meals, and never felt the pangs of unsatisfied appetite, even to conceive of an existence such as Melenda and Lotty had lived together for eight years, with never enough to eat on any day from year to year? Why, one asks, what contentment, what resignation, even what

acquiescence in life as a gift or a loan, of something precious, can there be when one is always hungry? Of the two other girls, the presence of Valentine made one daily more discontented with her lot, because of that terrible temptation of which we have heard. She could any day, only by saying the word, convert herself, she was told, from a work girl into a 'lady'—the word being used to signify one who does no work for her living, and wears fine clothes and lives in comfort. As for the other, it made her daily more obdurate and more angry, because she was so helpless, and it was Valentine who did everything for her friend.

'I won't be kind to her, then,' she said, when for the fiftieth time Lotty besought her and expostulated with her. 'I won't give in and be kind to her. Why should I? First, she comes and laughs at us.'

'No, she didn't laugh.'

'She said she was twins and she didn't know which she was. Do you call that laughing at us? I do. Then she comes again and thinks she can make it up with beefsteak and ham. No, Lotty; and it ain't likely.'

'She came to live here of her own accord. She wasn't obliged to come. She's never cross and never unkind; she never says a hard word of anybody; and oh, Melenda, the care she takes of me! Even you, my dear, never took more care. And the nights when she sits up with me, and the things she gets for me, and, oh, Melenda, I ain't her sister, and she'd do more than this for you if you'd only let her.' Melenda sniffed. That fact made Valentine's conduct the more intrusive, 'and she watches every day for you to give in a bit.'

'Let her watch, then,' said Melenda.

'No little pocket Gospel after all?' asked the Doctor again. He was standing at the foot of the bed looking at his patient. He had not removed his hat—a ceremony he usually omitted in his rounds—his hands were in his pockets, and his shoulders were a little rounded, and he looked as if he despised the vulgar details of good manners. 'No little pocket Gospel, then?'

'None—why?'

'Because—well—because, the summer is hot and this place is noisome, and you are doing the work of a hospital nurse, and somehow you look as if you ought to be at the seaside, or in some quiet country place under the trees. And, in short, what do you do it for?'

'Why do you ask for motives? You said yourself the other day that there was only one motive, and that was pure selfishness.'

'That is so. They call it religion, patriotism, benevolence, charity—whatever they please. It is all self-preservation.'

'And there is no disinterested action at all possible for poor humanity?'

'There are illusions. Women do wonderful things for men whom they love, as they call it. Men call it love when they subjugate a woman and get a slave for nothing. Why women delight in being slaves I do not know.'

'And so everything is an illusion.'

'Everything except what you see; and sometimes that is an illusion too. When life is over, what is the past but illusion? We are born: we live and suffer: and we die: and are forgotten. That is the history of Ivy Lane, where there are eight hundred people, and two births and one funeral every week. But I don't understand you. If we ever do get a lady here, she comes and looks about her, and is disappointed because we are not more unpleasant, and then she does a kind thing or two and goes away with a feeling that the sum of poverty has been sensibly alleviated by her visit. She has seen a suffering object, which gave her pain; she has relieved her suffering for a little while, which gave her pleasure. But you—why, you have given—Yourself. Well,'—he changed the subject abruptly—'what do you think of the working girl? You have got three of them to study. There are thousands just exactly like them.'

'I can think of these three only and how to help them.'

He answered indirectly. He took up Lotty's arm and bared it to the elbow.

'You see: a strong bone and a good length of limb. Nature designed this arm for a stout strong woman. A fair breadth of shoulder, too. Nature meant this girl to be a really fine specimen. Look at her forehead: it is broad and low—a capable forehead; and her mouth—see how fine are the lines and yet how strong; this was meant to be a very noble woman, strong in her illusions of love for husband and children. Yet, you see, a splendid model ruined.'

'Poor Lotty!'

'We are always wasting and ruining fine models. This street is full of human wrecks. You've got two of them below—Mr. Lane, the letter writer, and the old woman. What does it mean?'

'Can you tell me what it means ?'

'Nature says to man, "Learn my secrets, or I will kill you. I have no pity on anyone—I will kill you unless you learn my secrets." Very well : some of us, the happy few who can, are always learning these secrets, and saving men from Nature's traps. But man says to his brother, "If you are not strong enough to defend yourself against me, I will make you my slave ; you shall work for me on my own terms." I don't know whether Nature is more cruel than man, or man than Nature. Here you see'—he touched Lotty's cheek. The girl did not understand a word of what he was saying, but he was the Doctor, and if he were to cut off her arms she would not dream of resistance. 'Here is a case in which man, meeting no power of self-defence, has worked his wicked will, pretending that he is obeying the laws of political economy. That is to say, he turns this girl into a machine for doing what she ought not to have done at all, for longer hours than she ought to work, for less pay than she ought to receive, and for poorer food than any woman ought to eat. Nature, at her worst, would not have trampled on her worse than man has done.'

'What are we to do then ?'

He sat down and looked in her face blankly.

'I don't know. If I did know everybody else should know. There are only two ways of helping the working women, and one of these, at least, is impossible. The impossible way is that the ladies of the country shall unite to form a Protection League for their working sisters.'

'Why is that impossible ?'

'Because they don't care for their working sisters,' he replied, bluntly. 'You only care because you have lived among them and know what their sufferings are. Ladies deliberately shut their eyes ; they won't take trouble ; they won't think ; they like things about them to look smooth and comfortable ; they will get things cheap if they can. What do they care if the cheapness is got by starving women ? What is killing this girl here ? Bad food and hard work. Cheapness ! What do the ladies care how many working girls are killed ? Confess now.'

Valentine would not confess.

'Well, there may be another way. It is by the working people themselves, and that by a grand universal League, or Federation, or Brotherhood of Labour—men and women alike—to control wages and work. I do not see why such a League should

not be formed. If men can unite for one branch of work they ought to be able to unite for all.'

' Why should they not ? '

' Because the mass that has to be moved is so gigantic that not one prophet but ten thousand all preaching the same gospel at the same time are wanted. I wonder how it would work out.'

' How would it work out ? '

' We've always got to take into consideration man's greed and selfishness. However, if we got over that, first of all, a case like this would not be allowed. The League would make it impossible. The League——' he sat down and put his hands in his pockets, looking straight into Valentine's face, but as if he did not see her. ' I have often wondered what such a League would do. I suppose it would become a most stupendous tyranny—everything for the general good must be. I think it would try to be just on the whole—there's somehow a natural instinct against injustice; it would be the most powerful instrument ever devised; it would control the whole Government; it would go making all kinds of laws for the restriction of liberty, that is quite certain. I suppose they wouldn't let the men marry under thirty nor the women under five-and-twenty. As for the men with land and capital, and Corporate Bodies and Companies with property, I should say the League would make itself unpopular with them. One thing, however, the League would do, and that as soon as it was established.'

' What is that ? '

' It would insist on this girl and her friends working half the time for double the wages.'

' I don't see much difference,' said Valentine, ' between your League and Sam's Socialism.'

' I haven't the pleasure of knowing Mr. Samuel, but there is this difference—that my League will be formed by the people for the people, and the Socialists want to impose their scheme on the people.'

' Why not, if it is good for them ? '

' Because, young lady, you can't improve people by any scheme or law or government at all. They must improve themselves. The best chance is when every man feels that he is part of the Government. You have no idea of their obstinacy. They will neither be led nor driven nor coaxed; they will only go of their own free will. And some ways they will never go at all.'

' Then I wish the Brotherhood or League were formed already.'

'Perhaps you and your friends would lose your property and your money.'

'But we should free Melenda.'

'A very good thing for her, and I don't suppose it would be very bad for you. As for me, I have got no money, and my profession brings in as it is only the wages of a mechanic—so I shall not suffer.'

He got up and buttoned his coat.

'You, Lotty girl,' he said, 'keep quiet. I sometimes think'—he turned to Valentine again as he went out—'I sometimes think that I may live to see that great League of Labour.'

I know not what Lotty heard or understood of the Doctor's discourse, but it may have been this which suggested a truly wonderful dream that came to her that very afternoon when she fell asleep after dinner while Valentine sat reading, and through the open window came the murmur of the children's voices in the school behind Ivy Lane. According to an ancient authority there are five kinds of dreams; and sometimes they come through the gate of horn and sometimes through that of ivory. This dream came to Lotty through the gate of ivory. It was the kind described as the imagination of a non-existent thing, and yet a holy dream, and one to be received as a gift from heaven and sent to cheer and comfort a dying girl with the vision of what might be. She dreamed that she was in a workshop—lofty, well aired, and beautiful. She was doing some kind of work—I think she was making up white linen robes for the harpers who play before the Throne—and her work filled her with joy. She was quite well and strong, and without pain of any kind, and she felt a strange elasticity in her limbs. Her sister Tilly was beside her dressed in white like herself, and as she recognised her it was as if a sponge had blotted out the past, so that it should be remembered no more, and Lotty rejoiced that Tilly too should have a frock as white as any in the work-room.

Melenda was with her too, the lines gone from her face, her thin cheeks filled out, looking truly beautiful in the eyes of Lotty and her like; and Lizzie was there, also with work in her hand, but laughing and talking more than she worked. Valentine was there too, dressed just the same as herself, but she looked more lovely than all the rest; and the other one—she who had cried when Melenda spoke up; but now she was sitting beside Melenda with one arm round her neck. They were all so fond of Melenda

that they could not make enough of her. There were thousands of work-girls in the room ; they were all laughing and talking happily ; and outside the open window stretched a great garden with the morning sun lying on it, and orchards filled with trees loaded with ripe apples. The scent of flowers came into the room ; and no one was tired, no one was hungry, no one was cross or wicked. Strangest thing of all, Lizzie's father was with them, looking venerable with his long white hair brushed off his forehead. He was not in rags, but dressed like a gentleman, and he sat at a great organ. When he began to play, Valentine stood up to sing, and all the girls tried to sing too, but could not, because of the tears—tears of joy and happiness—and the memories of the cruel past, which choked them.

‘Why, Lotty, Lotty !’ said Valentine, ‘what is the matter, dear ?’

‘It was my dream,’ she replied, looking about her.

‘You laughed and cried together, dear. But you have had a long and refreshing sleep, and it is nearly teatime. This makes up for last night, doesn’t it ?’

CHAPTER IX.

SHOWING HOW THE BAND PLAYED.

‘MELENDNA says Sam’s here,’ said Lizzie, putting her head into the room. ‘If you want to see him, you’d better come at once. And, I say, you’d better look out. Melenda’s in a rage, and the band’s a-going to play, sharp !’

Sam Monument, from time to time, remembered that he had a sister, and went to visit her. It was not often ; because since his rise to greatness, he was no longer proud of his poor relations. The few among us who have raised themselves to the level of a Board School master will sympathise with Sam. Besides, it made him ashamed even to think of Melenda ; and it made him rage like Scylla and Charybdis, and the Maelström, and the rapids of Niagara, actually to see her at her miserable work. Again, there is a rule which should be carefully observed in visiting one’s poor relations ; but Sam had never heard of this rule ; namely, always to visit them in mild and cloudy weather. The former, that one may be spared the bitterness of cold ; and the latter,

so that there may be no mockery of sunshine. Sam came to Ivy Lane on a splendid summer evening, when the sunshine made everything glorious that was clean and neat, and magnified the meanness of everything that was dingy and ill-kept. When Valentine opened the door he was standing with his back to the empty fireplace, which gave him the command, so to speak, of the room. Melenda was sitting by the table, her work in her lap, and the thimble on her finger; but she was not sewing; and there was a gleam in her eye which betokened another approaching Triumph of Temper. She looked strangely like her brother: the eyes as bright, the lips as firm, only that her own red hair was long and Sam's was short, rising from his forehead like a cliff, so that his head resembled the rounded back of a hedgehog about to defend its property.

'Oh!' he said, with a kind of snort when Valentine appeared. 'You *are* here, then. Claude told me something about it. I hope you are pleased with what you have found. Ever been in this room before? Have you looked round it? Satisfied and pleased with it? Like to feel that your sister lives in it? Nice place, isn't it?' He went on without waiting for an answer. 'Nice work, too, they do in it. Wholesome, well-paid work. Work to make a woman rich and happy. Something for your rich friends to be proud of, isn't it?'

The room looked more than commonly dingy. The strings of the blind were broken; the blind itself was pinned up, and a reflection of the evening sun from an opposite window fell upon the side of the room, not so much lighting it up as showing how dingy it was, and how desperately shabby.

'It don't matter much what you think, Sam, nor what she thinks. Thinking can't alter things. Those who've got work to do must do the work they can get. She can give dinners to people who haven't the independence to refuse'—Melenda tossed her head at Lizzie, who laughed defiance—"and will only be the more discontented afterwards, when she goes away. But she can't get us better work nor better wages. What's the good then?'

'What did you come for?' Sam asked. 'What made you leave your friends and come down here? These people are your enemies: the working people are the natural enemies of the people who do nothing. I told you, when I saw you first, that you've got to choose. If you like to give them up, say the word, and I'll find something for you to do. If you won't give them

up, then go away back again, and enjoy yourself as long as you can, till the smash comes.'

'I shall not give them up, certainly,' said Valentine. 'And I am not going back again just yet.'

'Oh, very well. You're one of those who go tinkering up a rotten place here and painting over a bad place there, and pretending that everything is sound and healthy. I know the sort. You get some people together, and you give a concert, and call it softening the masses. You get a few pictures and hang 'em up in a schoolroom and call it introducing Art among the Lower Orders. Yah! Art and the Lower Orders! Or you have tea and cakes and a hymn, and call it bringing religion home to the people. And then you go around with pennies and oranges for the children and flannel for the old women, and call it bringing the classes together. As long as you choose to stay with them, I tell you all the people are your natural enemies. Melenda here is your enemy, and so is Lizzie, and so is the girl you've got laid up in the other room.'

There is a pleasing nursery fiction that accounts for many disagreeable things by a theory on the right and the wrong way of getting out of bed. Valentine remembered this and felt quite certain that Sam, Melenda, and Lizzie had all three got out of bed the wrong way that morning. There was going to be a Row, and one of uncertain dimensions. And she was invited by Melenda in order that she might assist at that Row and help to make it a Row Royal. Therefore, she made haste with a soft answer.

'I did not come with any ambitious idea of spreading Art or Religion. I simply came because I wanted to know—my sister—Melenda.' This was not a fib absolute, because when she came Melenda was a possible sister. But it was so far a fib that Valentine hesitated a little over its utterance.

'Ho!' said Melenda, just to show how very little way in knowledge Valentine had so far advanced.

'Partly I wanted to see with my own eyes the kind of life from which I—that is, Melenda's sister, Polly—had been taken.'

'Yes,' said Melenda; 'to look at us as if we were black savages in a show, and to give us half-a-sovereign each, and then go away and forget us.'

'Melenda is unjust,' Valentine replied; 'but she tolerates my presence, which is something, though she will not accept any service from me.'

'How long are you going to stay? You can't be comfortable here?' Sam asked.

'I didn't ask her to come, and I sha'n't ask her to stay,' said Melenda the Irreconcilable, now in her most stubborn mood, her upper lip stiffened and her eyes set stormy. Perhaps she was stimulated by the example of her brother, who was of mule-like obstinacy. He called it firmness.

'I am to stay here all the summer,' Valentine explained. 'Then I am going back for a time. After that my plans are not yet certain.'

'Humph!' said Sam. 'You've taken a great deal of trouble for nothing. That's all. As for wanting to know a girl who hasn't got the spirit to raise herself out of this'—he looked round him with the infinite contempt of a self-raised man—'I don't see what you expect to get by it. You've only put her back up so far.'

'That's all,' said Melenda; 'and it is going to keep up.'

'There's one thing you might do,' he went on. 'You might help to make the workwomen discontented. Suppose you got hold of Lizzie here!' He laid his hand upon her shoulder. 'Suppose you made her compare her frock with yours, and told her to ask why there is so much difference.' Lizzie lifted her great eyes upon Valentine's frock, which really was a very neat and finished piece of work, and fitted her like a glove. Her own, she knew well, could not be compared with it. Little did Sam know of the seeds of discontent already planted in her bosom. 'But that you don't dare to try. You and your friends are all for keeping them quiet. Make her feel that she hasn't got what she ought to have; then teach her why she hasn't got it—because she's robbed by your friends. Then there'll be a chance that the girls will combine to get it, and that they'll be backed up by the men. As for these girls, they haven't begun to grumble.'

'Haven't we?' said Melenda.

'They *believe* that there isn't more money to be got.'

'No more there is,' said Melenda.

'They think it is a law of the universe that they should work and live in a room like this, and go in rags, and be paid eleven-pence ha'penny a day.'

'And find your own cotton,' said Lizzie, furnishing a not unimportant detail.

'And fourpence for the workbook, which you can get for a

penny outside. And if you dare to complain they make it six-pence,' Melenda added.

'And be sworn at if they're Germans, and drilled if they're English. We like it, I suppose.'

'You're a fool, Sam,' said Melenda, putting the case plainly. 'You and your discontent! If you really think we like it, you're a bigger fool than you look. We didn't want her coming here, nor you neither, to teach us that it's a shame.'

'Nor to tell me to look at her frock and mine,' said Lizzie.

'Come then, Sam,' his sister went on while Valentine kept a careful silence, 'come then. Have you got anything better for us when we have got discontented? There's machine work and shirts at a penny apiece; we can get twopence a dozen for the button-holes; there's bottle-washing for five shilling a week, and cigar-makin' for the same; there's the dust yards and the sifting at a shilling a day. Shall we change for that? There's the matchmakers with the stuff that eats away their mouths—'

'Oh, Melenda!' said Valentine.

'What's he come here for, then? How can we find time to keep the place neat and tidy? Why ain't we better off? Let him show us the way, then.'

'It's better,' said Lizzie, 'to help people than it is to get into a rage with them. Valentine does help me and Lotty in spite of Melenda.'

Melenda looked as if she might turn on the other two as well as on her brother. But she refrained. 'If that is all you've got to say, Sam, you may as well go.'

'Coming here,' Lizzie went on, with a laudable desire to assist in the music of the band, 'and swearing at us as if it was our fault.'

'I didn't swear,' said Sam, in some confusion.

'You did. You always do when you come here.'

'Well, then, it's enough to make a pig swear,' he replied guiltily, because a Board School master certainly ought not to swear. Language and temper are beneath the dignity of a profession which should be above the minor weaknesses of humanity.

'Well, Sam, please do not swear again,' said Valentine, still anxious for peace; 'and now—you who know so much and have had so many opportunities for studying the question from your position—your exceptional and high position, Sam—won't you sit down quietly and give us your advice?'

He did not sit down, but he took the chair from her and

placed it before him, his hands on the back so that it made a kind of pulpit.

'All he's got to tell us,' said Melenda, 'is that it's a shame, and we ought to combine and strike.'

'It's the system,' Sam began. 'I am ready to give you the best advice if you'll only follow it. It's the rotten competitive system—you've got to abolish that. As for you girls combining and striking, you won't do it. I told you once to combine, but now I see that women ain't educated up to combination. Combination means common sense—you haven't got it; you haven't the brains nor the courage to do it.'

'We've got our independence, anyhow,' said Melenda.

'And much good that does you. Independence! As if anybody is independent who's got to work for your starvation wages. You're slaves—you're white slaves. That's what you are!'

'And what are you, then, I should like to know? You've got no work to do, I suppose?'

'We cannot alter the system,' said Valentine, again interposing; 'at least, I suppose we cannot alter it without a good deal of trouble and delay. Meantime, don't you think you could devise something temporary for Melenda and Lizzie until you have swept away competition?'

'Who wants his help?' asked Melenda. 'I tell you he can only say it's a shame. That's all he ever does say.'

'I can't help them,' said Sam; 'nobody can help them in that way. I tell you again that it's the fault of the system. There are women by thousands no better off. If you can make your ladies leave off trying to get things cheap; if you can make your masters contented with a workman's wage for profit; if you can make the men resolve that the women shall be properly paid, and that they must strike for them and forbid them to take less; well—if you can make everybody think of his neighbour first—then you may let your system alone, because it won't matter. You can't do that, and so you must destroy the system.'

'Then there seems a very poor chance for the present generation of shirt-makers. But what are you going to put in its place? And how do you know that it will be better than the present plan?'

Sam smiled with pity; girls brought up like Valentine were indeed ignorant.

'You know nothing,' he replied; 'I have told you already

some of our scheme, but I suppose Claude laughed at it and told you to forget it at once.'

'Tell me again, then, if you please.'

'Very well. Now listen. We shall destroy the competitive system. What does that mean? Why, that there will be no masters first, no capitalists, no landowners, no property of any kind.'

'Oh! then who will pay the workmen?'

'Listen, and don't interrupt. The State will be the only employer of labour. There will be no rich people. If you have a mountain of gold it will not buy you an hour of luxury, nor will it save you an hour of labour. The stores will be kept by the State, and the food distributed daily. All will work alike and all will live alike. There will be only one rate of wages, and men and women alike will be paid, not in money but by abundance of everything that is necessary and pleasant to life; no man will be at the beck and call of another. Think of that! Oh, we are on the eve of the most glorious revolution!' He swung his arms, and his eyes glowed. 'There will dawn before long the most glorious day. Why, there will be no crime then, because every man will have all he wants, so that there will be no temptation to steal and rob; and every man will be happy, so that there will be no temptation to violence; and every girl contented and well fed, so that every girl shall keep her self-respect. There will be one offence, and only one against the State—the crime of laziness, which will be punished by bread-and-water diet. There will be one education for all; the government shall be by the people for the people; there will be no rich class, no better class, no priests, no lazy class; everybody for a certain time every day will work at something productive—but production will be regulated by committees; for the rest of the time a man will do as he pleases. Some will become artists, some will study, some, I suppose, will be preachers, some scientific men, some actors, some will write books, some will play music—the only professional men who will not be required to work at production will be doctors of medicine and schoolmasters. These, of course, will be chosen from the cleverest of the boys. The courts of justice will be administered by juries who will sit every day all the year round, every man taking his turn; law shall be open to everybody and will be free, but there will not be much left to dispute about when all property is held in trust for everybody. All the things that are now luxuries—the rare fruits and the costly wines—will be distributed to the sick and the old. Books, pictures, music, and plays will be produced for

nothing at all after working hours. Every man will be taught that he must be watchful of his own rights and jealous for the community. Every man will take his turn to be a policeman. There will be no other distinctions among men than those which nature has created: for some will be strong and some weak, some will be quick and some slow. But there will be no titles, no aristocracy, no class, and no pride of one man over another. Think of it! No more poverty—no more disease from luxury or from privation, no more ignorance, no more indolence, no more vice! Think of it, I say, if ever you think of anything.'

He paused, not because he was exhausted, but because he wanted, naturally, to observe the effect of his oration.

Melenda pretended that she was not listening. But she was. She listened against her will; she could not tell that the thing was as yet only a dream, and could never be realised in her own time. Sam's words filled her soul with vague hopes and a warm glow; and he looked so grand while he spoke that she was proud of him, and forgave him for his impatience and contempt. Lizzie for her part was wholly unmoved. She thought of nothing but of Sam's advice to be discontented and to compare Valentine's frock with her own. It was right, then, to be angry and to ask why she must live on slops and go in rags, and Valentine lived like a lady.

As for Valentine, it seemed to her as if in this squalid room the words had altogether a new force and meaning. In Claude's chambers she had only half perceived their significance, but here—in the presence of the two girls—they fell upon her ears like the first preaching of a new gospel. What sacrifice would be too great to bring about the state of things pictured by this young apostle? Surely there has never been since the world began any dream more generous and more noble than this of the Socialist, insomuch that there are some who think that it was first revealed to the world by the Son of God Himself. It is so beautiful that it will never be suffered to be forgotten, so beautiful that mankind will henceforth be continually occupied in trying to make it a practical reality; and with every successive failure, will always be drawing nearer and nearer to the goal, until at last, if the kind gods consent, even after many years and many generations, it shall be won, and with it the Kingdom long talked of and little understood. But those who expect it in this their lifetime might as well expect the Kingdom of Heaven.

'Thank you, Sam,' said Valentine, bringing herself back to the present with an effort. 'But this is a scheme for the far future.'

'No, it is for the present. Not to-day perhaps, nor to-morrow, but before your hair is grey it will be realised over the whole world.'

'Meantime what are Melenda and Lizzie to do?'

'We've got to go on working,' said the latter.

'What will you do meantime for your sister, Sam?'

'Melenda may—she may—' he made an heroic effort, 'well, she may come and live with me if she'll behave.'

'I sha'n't then, there! I won't live with anybody, and I won't behave, and I'll go in and out just as I please.'

'Can you not find any better way of life for them?' Valentine persisted.

'No, I can't. There isn't any better work for girls who can only sew. You must alter the system. The work and the wages are getting worse instead of better. The worse they get, the more injustice there is, the sooner will be the end. You must begin with the beginning, I tell you. Destroy Capital and abolish Property. But what do you care for the people?'

'I care for this room at least and the people in it. Come, Sam, give me credit for a little humanity. I care for those of the people whom I know. Isn't that enough for a beginning? How if we were all to do as much? Perhaps there would be no need to alter the System.'

'You talk like a woman. Well, then'—he picked up his hat, which he had flung on the floor at the earlier stage of the discussion—'I've made my offer. If Melenda likes to accept it, she can. If not, she will please herself. I'm going. Good night, Melenda.'

'Will you let me walk with you a little way?' Valentine asked.

'Just as you like.' It seems an ungracious way of putting it, but what he meant was simple consent.

They walked down Hoxton Street, across Old Street, and along the Curtain Road, where the furniture places were closed, and the street quiet, and the German journeymen were out of sight in some hidden dens, smoking pipes, and dreaming like Sam of a New World.

'You belong to the other side,' he said after a while. 'That is very certain. Yet I should like to talk to you; but there—it is no use, I suppose. You've been brought up in their way, and because it's an easy life you think it is beautiful.'

'I only know of one side.'

'That's rubbish. In all history there's always two sides:

there's the tyrant and there's the slave : there's the oppressor and there's the oppressed : there's the rich and there's the poor : there's the workman and there's the master. The Lord didn't make simple man, you see, He made two classes. There were two Adams. That's what they want us to believe. The land belongs to one of them, and the duty of tilling it for nothing to the other. Oh, yes, I know the talk. There's two classes when we are quiet ; there's only one class when it comes to keeping them contented. Wait till we get our turn.'

'In your scheme, Sam, no one is to be lazy, no one is to shirk work, and the best men in the country will think it their highest privilege to work for all. I understand you to mean this. Yes. It is very beautiful. But how are you going to teach and to discipline the people and keep them up to the mark ?'

'Oh !' Sam replied superior. 'Why, the very question shows your ignorance. You don't understand the first elements of our party. Don't you see that there will be no necessity for teaching at all—that the very establishment of justice for the first time in the history of the world—free and equal justice, with no favours to any, will create such a grand universal jealousy that all injustice of every kind will be made impossible ? There never has been any justice hitherto. There have been laws and lawyers, and decisions of courts have been sold to the highest bidders. But there has been no justice. It will be such a beautiful thing that everybody will watch everybody else and himself as well, to see that there is no shirking of duty. There will be an irresistible determination—but of course you cannot understand the force of the Will of the People ?'

'Well,' said Valentine, to whom the talk about the irresistible Will of the People was a new thing—and indeed it is strange that while cultivated and educated men have never agreed together to have a Will of their own and to pronounce it, we are constantly told that the rough and ignorant are thinking as one man, and acting together with one consent and in such beautiful unanimity—'well, then, the Will of the People, I suppose, will order everybody to be equally good, and the order will be obeyed without any difficulty. Why, it will be a return to the Promised Land—No, it will be nothing short of a return to the Garden of Eden. And, Sam, just think what a discovery you have made ! The flaming sword which turns every way in the hands of the cherubim is nothing else than the Competitive System.'

'As you like,' Sam replied a little sulkily. There was just a

faint hint of ridicule in Valentine's words. No Prophet can abide ridicule. 'I don't care what you call it. Call it what you please. Only don't pretend that you misunderstand the meaning.'

'Sam, you are so strong and brave,' Valentine laid her hand upon his arm, 'you are so clever, you know so much, that I am sure you can help us if you think it over. Never mind the Competitive System: that will take a good many years to destroy, I am sure, and perhaps it will outlast our time. Try to find some readier way to help those girls. Consider, one of them is dying slowly; we can't save her; we can only make her easier: the other two are wasting their lives in the most terrible poverty. I could give them money, but indeed it is not alms they want. Melenda will not have it. Won't you try to help them? Think, Sam, oh, think'—she laid her hand upon his arm—"of their rags and their misery, and try to help them.'

'I do think of their rags. Good God! Valentine, or Polly, or whatever they call you, I think of their rags and their misery for weeks together after I have seen Melenda.'

'Then I wish, Sam, that you saw her every day.'

'If I did I should only hate the system more and more. That other girl—she'll die, I suppose.'

'Yes, she must die. Melenda is stronger. The one who will go next is Lizzie, unless something can be done.'

'There's only one thing that can be done—destroy the Competitive System. Abolish property. Sweep away Capital, Lands, and Church, and Masters. Give Socialism a fair start.'

Nothing more could be got out of him. A mathematician, we know, tries his theory on elementary cases; Socialism, and the ladies and gentlemen who construct, with infinite labour, constitutions, schemes, and plans for the universal good, do not. The simple case is beyond them. They are full of rage against the old system, but their indignation is expended in deepening their political convictions.

There was once another man who went down the Jericho road and fell among thieves. First there passed by the priest, just as in the former case, his scornful chin in the air: and then the Levite followed. Now this Levite did not immediately pass by, but he stopped and inquired carefully into the particulars of the case and made full notes of them, and then he went his way, and out of the notes he compiled a most tremendous oration, eloquent, fiery, and convincing, which he delivered at a meeting of the Democratic Federal Union, on the wretched system under which robbers

are suffered to exist, and propounded another System by means of which there would be no more robbers in the land at all. And yet the old System goes on still, and still we see coming along the hot and thirsty road the Samaritan with his nimble two pence.

‘Good night, Sam,’ Valentine said coldly; ‘I ask you for advice, and you offer me the chance of a new System. Go away and rail at Competition, while we look after its victims.’

CHAPTER X.

THE REVEREND RANDAL SMITH.

THE assistant priest of St. Agatha’s—this was the church where the morning congregation did not contain a single man—was at this time—he has just been promoted to the more independent sphere of a mission church—the Rev. Randal Smith. It was he who ran up the stairs when Valentine was singing in order to discover the secret of this strange thing.

This young gentleman became, by a gradual and natural development of events, one of Valentine’s friends. Their friendship, it is true, was based upon what the Doctor maintained to be the true basis of all friendship—self-interest. He first introduced himself to her in the street—there was no other common place of meeting—stopping before her and half lifting his hat. It was one of those sweet things in felt with a very broad flat brim and strings and a tassel, and he took it off with the doubtful courtesy which certain Englishmen yield to the Uncertain Person, as if it were a disgrace to lift the hat to any under a recognised social position. This prejudice will vanish when the Board Schools condescend to teach manners, and the working man has learned to lift his hat to the working woman.

‘I beg your pardon—’

He affected the quick breathless manner adopted by many young clergymen and by some young masters in public schools. It is a manner which may mean anything, like an algebraical symbol—perhaps that is the reason why it has been adopted—but it is really understood to be a ‘note,’ or outward and visible sign, of earnestness coupled with intellectual superiority. At Toynbee Hall, very oddly, it is not recognised, which makes one suspect the sincerity and the superiority of that institution.

'I beg your pardon. I think I heard you singing the other evening in Ivy Lane.'

'It is very likely.'

'I—I—have also learnt'—it was difficult to believe—'that you are the—the—sister of one of the girls who live there.'

'It is possible.'

He was quite a young man, not more than five or six and twenty, slight and small in stature, shaven of cheek and chin, pale-faced, insignificant of aspect. As to his creed, he professed to belong to the small and narrow sect called Ritualists, and this was proclaimed to the general world by the brim of his hat which was so broad, and the length of his skirts. By these symbols he professed the most decided views as to his own authority, and the tremendous powers which he held by virtue of his office; though he was really a most simple creature, who would have been crushed, had he at all understood or realised the nature of his own pretensions, by the mere weight of them; he had never distinguished himself in any way either at school or college; he had read next to nothing, and knew next to nothing, of history, literature, or theology; his creed was narrow, bigoted, unhistorical, and intolerant; his manner was fussy, underbred, and full of little affectations. With his priestly pretensions, and his ignorance, and his fussiness, he was just exactly the kind of figure that scoffers like to put up in a pillory and pelt with epigrams, new and old, derisive laughter, mocking questions, and sneers and jeers. He was also exactly the kind of man who would not alter his course for any amount of epigrams, whether they cut like flints or whether they broke in his face like rotten eggs; and, when they took him down from his pillory, he would have gone away wondering that the world could be so sinful as actually to scoff and sniff at the sacerdotal office.

In other respects this assistant priest belonged to a kind of mortal which has never been extinct or unknown amongst us, and of late seems to have become common. It is not the cleverest kind, nor is it the most learned, the most critical, the most logical, or the most capable of argument. But it is a kind which has one great distinctive quality: it has perceived very plainly that there is a kind of life, possible to all who choose to follow it, which is an imitation, however humble, of a certain great Exemplar. In fact, no Hermit, no Solitary, no Friar of orders grey, black, white, blue, green, yellow, buff, indigo, magenta, mauve, or alezan, ever more diligently followed that Exemplar than do the men of this

kind. At the age of twenty-three, that is to say, as early as it is permitted to them, they absolutely renounce for ever the world and all its delights ; they give up society, culture, learning, art, and pleasures of every kind ; they plunge head foremost into a vast ocean, mirky and cloudy, whose waves have no brightness and whose waters know no smiles ; they become, in fact, assistant priest or curate, whichever they prefer to be called, in a parish of poverty ; they are the slaves, all day long, of the people ; they cease to have any individual life ; they have no longer any pursuits.

It is a comparatively unimportant detail in such a life, that the man has a church where he must perform certain duties. Yet these take time ; he has to read prayers, or to sing matins and evensong, if he prefers that way of describing the Function ; he marries and baptises ; he has once a week to provide a discourse always full of new thoughts, powerful logic, and words which burn—at least, these things are expected. It does not really matter in the least what he preaches in places like Hoxton, because no one ever goes to church. Generally, he preaches a set of doctrines which the British working man is just as likely to embrace as he is to abandon the franchise, or to dissolve his trade unions, or to give up his beer, or to join goody clubs. But his real work is outside his church. He is the almoner of the parish ; he is always administering charitable funds, finding out deserving cases, and dividing eighteenpence equally among thirteen poor people ; he is a professor of the conduct of life ; because weaker brethren get drunk he has to wear a nasty little blue ribbon, and may not look upon the amber and the froth of the cheerful pewter ; because there are so many to be helped, and so little to help them with, he lives with the greatest frugality, and gives away all that he can spare, being paid for the most part in the coin of ingratitude ; he has got schools to visit ; of late years he has been expected—who has neither Art nor culture—to become the Prophet of culture and the Fosterer of Art ; and now, on top of all these duties, he has had imposed upon him the care of providing and devising amusement, holidays, excursions, concerts, clubs, and institutes for the young and old. He works all day long and regrets that there are not more than sixteen hours available ; he is always cheerful. And for the sake of what he does and the life he leads, let us by no means laugh at this young man, but suffer him without sneers or epigrams to believe what it pleases his unhistorical soul to think he believes, so long as he does not try to make us acknow-

ledge that he carries about in his own little waistcoat pocket, on the same bunch as his latch-key, the keys of the Gates of Heaven.

'I—I—I heard you sing,' he repeated. 'And I was much pleased. For an untrained voice—'

'Quite so,' said Valentine gravely. But there was in her eyes a light for which there is no prettier word, I regret to say, than the word 'twinkle.' Nothing is more delightful than the sudden awakening to a sense of the humorous situation shown by the twinkle of a girl's bright eyes.

'But perhaps you have been trained. I beg your pardon.'

'Pray go on.'

'I have an Institute of working boys. It occurred to me that perhaps—perhaps—would you sing to them?'

'I do not know. Will you show me your Institute?'

He led her into one of the streets which branch off right and left, and stopped at a corner house.

'This is the place,' he said. 'We get the working lads here, and teach them and amuse them in the evening.'

The door opened, without the intervention of hall or passage, into a good-sized room of irregular shape, fitted with benches and one or two narrow tables; at one end was a great fireplace with texts displayed above it, and at the other end was a low platform with a piano. On the walls at the end were a few shelves which formed the boys' library.

'Upstairs,' said the young clergyman, his eyes kindling as he showed his beloved Institute, 'there are class-rooms and a bagatelle board, where the older lads may smoke if they like; outside in the yard is a gymnasium. This is our common sitting and reading room where we sometimes try singing. Unfortunately I was never taught to sing or play. I can intone of course, but I cannot sing, and as for accompaniment I am trying to learn a few simple chords. Perhaps I could help out with something for you.'

'Let me hear you,' said Valentine.

His knowledge of the art was limited and his simple chords were few. He confessed that he rose every morning at six in order to acquire some mastery over the instrument, but as yet with small success.

'What do you do with your boys?' she asked him.

It appeared on explanation that his evenings were wholly devoted to the care of those boys, with whom he worked, read, taught, and played. While he spoke of them his face lit up, he

forgot the little mannerism of speech and became natural. This was the work that he loved.

Valentine felt that she stood on the threshold of a new kind of life. She went on to question him. He had other work, and a great deal of it, of a much less interesting kind. He ought to have had nothing to do but to look after the boys, whose minds he was filling with thoughts which would lead some of them whither he could not guess. But he had, besides, the church services every day, sick people to visit, poor people to relieve, a mission chapel to serve in some slum or other, addresses to prepare—an endless round of work, with no rest for a single day in the week and no hope that it would ever grow lighter.

'It is a hard life,' said Valentine, wondering at the courage of those who embrace such a life.

'It is my Work,' he replied, lapsing into breathlessness and folding his hands, after the unreal manner of his kind. Why will they fold their hands?

Valentine thought that he belonged to those heroes who are best left unseen. There are many such, and when they die their lives read most beautifully.

She sat down and suffered her fingers to ramble over the keys thinking of this man and his life. Presently she looked up. 'I will sing for your boys whenever you please.'

'Thank you.'

'Do you know all the people in your parish? Do you know the working women?'

'I try to know them all,' he replied, breathlessly. 'It is my duty to know them all. The parish clergy are in charge of them.'

'Do you ever think of them? Can you tell me how anything can be done for them?'

'If they would come to church, and submit to discipline.'

'I do not speak of their religion, but of their material welfare. Can anything be done to get them better wages and easier work?'

'I do not know. It is not the duty of a parish priest to consider the subject of work.'

'You are among these poor working women all day long, and yet you have never considered the subject? Surely it must force itself upon you.'

'What would be the use? I can do nothing. I suppose there must always be poverty—"The poor ye have always with you."

'Oh!' Valentine cried, impatiently. 'Nobody ever tries to

help. I have asked a schoolmaster, and a doctor, and a scholar, and now I have asked a clergyman ; and there is no help in any of them. Does nobody in the world care what becomes of the working women ?'

'The Church cares for all alike,' he replied, still breathless and superior.

She bade him good morning and left him. There was then no help to be got from man, not even from those who go continually among the people and see their suffering and the patience of the girls every day. There are men and women working perpetually for every other possible class, but none for the work-girl. She alone is left unprotected and unheeded, and no man regardeth her.

Then an Oracle came to her ; the true Oracle is unsuspected and unsought—sudden. You must not go and inquire at Delphi any more. The Voice comes to you of its own accord. It came to Valentine from an old lady. There were two of them standing on the kerbstone ; one carried a loaf under her apron, and the other a key. They were clean and respectable old ladies. As Valentine passed them, one said to the other, 'No, mum, it's no use expecting it ; and if you want a thing done, you must do it yourself.'

These words Valentine rightly and piously accepted as an Oracle or Voice from Heaven.

The assistant priest meanwhile stood at the door of his Institute, and watched her walking down the street with buoyant step and fearless carriage. I suppose he had seen young ladies before, but it seemed a long time, and for the space of two minutes and a half he allowed his thoughts to follow the way of most young men's thoughts in spring, though it was now full summer. In that brief interval he enjoyed in imagination a whole twelve months at least of the Blessed Life, the Life of Love and Ease and Happiness, with such a companion as Valentine. At five-and-twenty there are moments when all other things, and especially the Great Renunciation, seem stark staring Foolishness compared with the Life of Love. I believe that all women in all ages have secretly entertained this doctrine, and that all men have from time to time been tempted by it. The Light of Asia experienced many such painful moments of doubt, though his biographers have passed them over. We know, besides, how hermits and holy men have been wont to keep tubs of ice-cold water and deep snowdrifts ready against these attacks of the Devil. A terrible

thing, indeed, should a young man, after he has gone a-hermiting, meanly give it up and sneak back to his sweetheart!

Now, as Valentine walked along the street, just after she received the oracle, she encountered the very last man she would have expected to meet in Hoxton.

'You here, Mr. Conyers!'

It was, in fact, Mr. Conyers himself, and the great man appeared to be confused at the meeting. He actually blushed and stammered.

'I, yes, yes, I am here. And you, Miss Valentine?'

'I am staying with some friends.'

'Yes, I remember. Your sister told me. I thought, however, you were gone to Whitechapel. Everybody goes to Whitechapel now. I am travelling about London in search of a new face for my picture. All the faces somehow seem to have been used up.'

'Have you succeeded?'

'I hardly know yet.'

She left him and went on her way.

'She is staying with friends.' Mr. Conyers looked after her thoughtfully. 'I am glad she didn't meet me five minutes ago, with that big-eyed girl. It might have been awkward. She is staying with friends—her own people. Violet told me as much, and Claude is looking after her. Is it likely that Lady Mildred would suffer her own daughter to live in such a place as this and be looked after by Claude? Lady Mildred may be liberal in her views, but she must think of her daughter's reputation. Oh, there cannot be any longer a doubt.'

A sweet smile—the smile of contentment—played upon his lips. He was thinking of Beatrice Eldridge and of himself, and of a perfectly easy life, with nothing to do but to enjoy and to develop, and then slowly to ripen and to decay. 'I think Valentine is better-looking than Violet,' he murmured; 'but with such a hatfull of money, who would make comparisons?'

Meantime the big-eyed girl, who was none other than Lizzie, strolled slowly homewards—it was her dinner hour—thinking of the words that she had heard once more and for the tenth time, because this man would not leave her alone. The temptation to have done with her hard and wretched work had grown almost to a desperate yearning for ease. It seemed to lie at her feet ready to be picked up. The more she saw of Valentine the more she longed to be even as she was. The discontent which Sam wished

for all women had seized upon her, but without producing quite the effect which he anticipated. Lizzie had no desire to combine with other girls. She wished, on the other hand, to run quite away from them, and never to have anything more to do with them.

In the evening Valentine sang to the boys. There were twenty or thirty of them with the Reverend Randal Smith. She played to them first, and then she sang to them, not one or two, but a dozen rattling good songs which went straight to the boys' hearts and made them all sit with open mouths. And before she sang her last song, which was that pretty old ditty about Sally in our Alley, she made a little speech.

'Boys,' she said, 'you will soon be men and able to look out for yourselves. Will you remember your sisters, the girls who cannot help themselves? You will have reasonable hours and good pay; they will have to work all day long for cruel pay. It is your business to help them—I don't know how yet—but you must find out if others cannot. They will be your sweethearts. Can you bear to think that the girls you love are cruelly neglected and shamefully ill-used? Perhaps you will be able to make a union for them. Think of them. I shall come and sing to you again if I am allowed. Every time I come I will remind you of your duty towards your sisters—the girls who work. Now I will sing you a song all about one of them and her sweetheart.'

CHAPTER XI.

A DEAD MAN'S STEPS.

IN the multitude of counsellors, as we know, purposes are established. Hitherto, however, Valentine's counsellors had advanced her no more than those of the Patriarch Job. She looked from one to the other, asking in vain the questions which everyone asks when he begins to understand the simple facts. But there was no answer from any, save from Sam, and he proposed to meet the case by simply knocking down the house of cards and building it up again.

She thought of the old lady in the almshouse. Perhaps from her she might get something practical, something that would help Melenda at least, something short of Sam's universal revolution and the Doctor's universal confederation of labour. It is by a

natural instinct that mankind in all ages, and at every juncture, have sought the advice of old women, because none are so wise as to the conduct of life, especially—which is not generally known—old women in almshouses. Their superiority is due to the happy circumstance that they have nothing to do but to observe, to reflect, and to piece together their experiences.

One must not, however, suppose that all old women know everything. Some are specialists; as, for example, those who know the art of healing, and the properties of herbs. Then there are those who understand the management of Man; it is a secret, and one man, at least, who has learned this secret, will never reveal it; but it is a very simple secret, the management of Man in all his characters, as brother, lover, father, and husband. Some, again, are deeply versed in the treatment of tender infants. Some can read and foretell the future, plain and clear, for all inquirers, either by the cards, or by the hand, or by signs and omens, or by the appearance of birds. Some can judge, with the greatest accuracy, of character from the face, or a single feature in the face, or from the voice, or the hand, or the foot. Some can read thoughts, and can advise a man by knowing exactly what is passing in his mind. Some can charm warts and order rheumatism to vanish; and some can inform the inquirer exactly, and without any oracular indefiniteness, whether any proposed course of action will be lucky or unlucky. They are Sibyls every one. I do not know what advice Mrs. Monument would have given to Valentine's questions, because, most unfortunately, she was prevented from putting any by a very singular occurrence.

It was this: Valentine found the old lady sitting alone, and in a strange state of nervous agitation, with shaking hands and trembling lips—in the condition known to inebriates as ‘jumpy.’

‘What’s the matter, mother?’ she asked. ‘Your hands are trembling, and so are your lips. Are you ill?’

‘No, Polly, no. Oh, thank Heaven you’ve come, my dear! I don’t know myself to-day. When you spoke just now I actually thought it was her ladyship’s voice, and I never even heard your step outside. Give me your hand, child. There! I feel safe while you are here.’

‘Why, mother, what is it?’

‘I sent Rhoder away after dinner, because I couldn’t bear her fidgets. I would rather go without my tea. And I went into the chapel; but I couldn’t get any rest. And, oh, dear, dear! how glad I am you’ve come, Polly!’

'Well, mother, you will tell me presently when you feel a little stronger. You shall have your tea earlier this afternoon. I want to talk to you about Melenda.'

'What about Melenda, Polly? She's never been the good and dutiful daughter that you are. She doesn't come to see her mother but once a month, and then she's always in a rage. She came last Sunday and tore round and carried on dreadful about you and Lotty. Never mind that. What about Melenda?'

'She is working too hard and living too low. She ought to be made to do some other kind of work. What could she try?'

'I always told her—but you might as well talk to a stick or a stone—that honest service is the best thing in the world for a young woman. What is her freedom after all? She's free to walk the streets and to get into bad company; she's free to learn bad manners, and she's free to go hungry and ragged. Well, my dear, she won't hear my advice, and—Oh, what's that?'

'It's nothing, dear,' said Valentine. 'But, mother, what makes you so nervous to-day?'

'I can't tell you, child. I can't tell anybody.'

It was useless to ask her for advice. The old lady was incoherent and incapable of thought. Valentine made haste to get ready the tea and to talk on indifferent things. And while she talked she saw that her mother either listened with an effort or did not listen at all, but suffered her lips to move in silence, while the trembling of her hands showed the disquiet of her mind.

When she had taken tea, which is a sedative and restorative of the highest order, the old lady felt herself stronger and breathed more freely.

'Polly,' she said, 'if you hadn't come to-day, I should have gone clean off my poor head, I should.'

'Well, mother, wouldn't you be easier if you told me all the trouble? Is it anything about one of the boys? Is Joe in difficulties?'

'No, no, nothing's the matter with Joe. And I can't tell Joe, because he would only laugh at me. But I must tell somebody. My dear,' she stooped forward and whispered, 'I've had a most terrible fright.'

'A fright? Did thieves try to break in—here?'

'No, Polly; no, not thieves. Bless you! I ain't afraid of thieves. It's far worse than that.'

'What was it?'

'I heard a step, Polly.'

'A step ?'

'Polly, I can't tell you ; the young don't understand what a dreadful thing it is to hear a step you haven't heard for twenty years—a dead man's step—and to wonder why it came and what it wanted ; and then to remember all the misery that step might have caused if the dead man wasn't dead. I know he's dead. I'm quite certain of that. Yet I'm terrible put out, my dear ; if I hadn't told you I think I must have gone out of my senses, so shook I am to-day. Some one I must ha' told. I couldn't tell Rhoder, because Joe would never forgive me if I did. She's one of them who is never to know. Claude is another, and so is Sam.'

'Whose step was it like, then ?'

'Polly, give me your hand again. Oh, what a blessing you are to me, my dear ! Your Christian name was Marla, because he ordered it ; but I've always called you Polly, and I always shall. It was the step of your own father, my dear, who's dead and gone.'

'My father ? But since he is dead'—for the moment her thoughts turned to a certain portrait, that, namely, representing Sir Lancelot in his uniform as Colonel of Yeomanry Cavalry proudly bestriding a gallant charger. Then she remembered that, unlike any other girl in history, she had, in the mind of most people, two fathers. There are many girls who have only one father between them ; but Valentine's is absolutely the only case on record in which a girl has had more than one father. 'Why,' she added, 'it is twenty years since my father died.'

'No, my dear, it is only five years. Joe brought me the news, and I cried for joy and thankfulness. Cried for joy, I did.'

'Only five years ? But we always thought——'

'I told her ladyship twenty years ago that he was dead. It wasn't true ; and yet he was as good as dead to me and to the children ; and to the world as well. I don't know whether the world or me was better pleased that he was dead to everybody. I don't know which of us prayed the hardest that he would never come to life again.'

'Why, mother, what does this mean ?' The bitterness of these words, and the intensity with which they were uttered, startled and terrified Valentine. What could they mean ? She turned pale with a sudden presentiment of evil.

'I told Lady Mildred a falsehood. It did her no harm, and I couldn't—no, I couldn't tell her the truth—her who'd known

me when I was respectable, and didn't even guess what had happened. It was my secret all to myself and to Joe. There's some things a woman can't tell. As for the truth, Joe and me knew it, and nobody else, and I was then on Hackney Marsh out of the way, and there was plenty of time before me even if he should come back, and I thought to get the children put out to work so as he shouldn't know where they were nor ever be able to do them any harm, or bring shame upon them as he brought it on me.'

'Do them harm? Bring shame upon them? Why?'

'You don't know, Polly. But I'll tell you now, because I can talk to you as I can't to Melenda or the boys; and oh, my dear, I feel the comfort of having a daughter I can talk to.'

'Go on, mother,' said Valentine.

'Well then, my dear, if there was ever a wickeder man than your father in the whole world, Lord help his wife and children! And if ever there was a man who was more bent on wicked ways and more gloried in his wicked life, I never heard of him.'

'Where was he then, when he was dead to you and——' Here she stopped, and her cheek flamed suddenly scarlet as if she had received a shameful blow, for she understood where he was. Those who are dead to wife and children, yet living: those whose living death is a subject of rejoicing in the world, are in——

'Mother,' she said, 'he was in prison.'

'Hush! my dear,' her mother whispered, 'not so loud. Yes, he was in prison. Hush! don't ever say that word out loud again. Nobody knows it but Joe and me. Joe was old enough to know when he was took. Thank God, the knowledge of it frightened him and helped to make him the sober steady man he is. No one else knows—not Joe's wife nor yet his children. They don't know. And none of the rest knows, not Sam, nor Claude, nor Melenda. Don't you tell them, Polly—don't you never tell them. Sam's that proud and set up with his grand position and his success that it would cut him to the heart, and my Claude, too, though, of course, he isn't to compare with Sam. Don't make them hang their proud heads. And Melenda, too—bless the girl—with her independence. Don't shame them, Polly, don't tell them.'

'I shall not tell. Oh, mother, why did you tell me?' she asked impatiently.

'When you came here without any play actin', and leaving Miss Beatrice at home with her Mar and kind and thoughtful for

your mother, my dear; oh, what a blessing it is to have my Polly back again'—Valentine kissed her and fondled her hand, penitent already for her impatience—'full of your soft and ladylike ways, my dear, which Melenda couldn't never learn, living as she does, slaving and starving, it came into my head that I must some day tell you. What's the good of having a daughter if you can't tell everything that is in your mind?'

'Tell me everything,' said Valentine with a sinking heart.
'Tell me everything, then, if it will relieve your mind, dear.'

'I wouldn't have told you anything, my dear, if it hadn't been for that dreadful step which frightened me out of my wits almost. It was nigh upon the stroke of ten, because I heard the clock soon afterwards. I'd forgotten to lock the door; why, I often leave it ajar when I go to bed so as Rhoder can get in first thing in the morning. I was fast asleep—I must have been asleep though I dreamed I was awake, and all of a sudden in my dream of being awake I heard his step. It came over the flagz within the court and walking quickly, as he always walkeo, stopped at my door and so into the house.'

'Oh!' Valentine was trembling now because that strange horror, which we call the fear of the supernatural, is the most catching thing in the world, much more catching than measles.
'Oh! and then you heard his footstep on the flag stones?'

'Yes, and in the house; the step came into the room below. I don't know how long it lasted because I couldn't move hand or foot, and I couldn't breathe even, and my tongue was tied and I couldn't open my mouth. Oh, dear, it was last night.' She stopped, overcome by the recollection of that dreadful dream.

'When I came to I got up and crept downstairs and felt about the room. But no one was there. How should there be? Blind people can't see ghosts, like other people, but they can feel them if there's one about. There was a blind woman once in the village when I was a girl, and they said the reason why she always looked frightened was that she was haunted by the ghost of her husband. He'd sit beside her bed all night and say nothing, and she couldn't see him, but she felt him there, and if all tales about her was true, it served her right. She died young, my dear, because she couldn't bear it. If one blind woman, why not two? Perhaps he came repentant. Well, I'm ready to forgive him, now he's dead; I couldn't before.' Many Christians resemble Mrs. Monument in this view of forgiveness as a duty.

'You are quite sure there was no one there?'

'Neither man nor ghost was there, and the door was ajar just as I'd left it.'

'And was nothing stolen?'

'No, my dear; there isn't anything worth stealing.'

'It was a strange dream,' said Valentine; 'a strange and a dreadful dream. Did you hear the step again when you went back to bed?'

'No, my dear, not again. But I lay awake all night waiting for it, though I knew it was only a dream.'

'Shall I stay with you to-night?'

'No, my dear, I am better now I've told you. I am not afraid any longer.'

'Well, don't forget to lock and bolt your door.'

'Locks and bolts won't keep out ghosts. And never a lock nor a bolt ever made would keep *him* out when he was alive, much less now he's dead.'

'Forget your dream, mother, and tell me more about my father. Tell me all, unless it gives you pain to talk about him.'

'No, my dear, it eases me, because if I don't talk about him I think about him. I almost wish I hadn't told you anything, Polly. It won't make you any happier to know that. But then I was so upset—'

'Yes, mother, it was better for you. I know now that my father's only legacy to his children was a record of disgrace which you have mercifully concealed.'

'Disgrace and shame, Polly,' the blind woman echoed.

Presently she went on again.

'When he came to the village first and began courting, my head was turned because he was such a handsome lad and I was such a homely one. His ways were finicking, as if he was a gentleman, and there was nothing that he couldn't do. He'd play the fiddle, which he did most heavenly, till you either laughed, or cried, or danced, just as he wanted you to do; he could do conjuring tricks, and he'd make you believe whatever rubbish he wanted; he could carve most beautiful in wood; and at his own trade, which was locksmithing, I don't suppose there was a cleverer lad in the world. Well, I never asked him what he came into our parts for, and though there was three houses broke open while he was coming and going, nobody ever suspected my James, and least of all could I suspect him. And on Sunday always in his place at church beside me with his book in

his hand, so that the vicar thought he was a good young man indeed, and everybody told me I was a lucky woman. A proud woman I was, I can tell you, when I stood with my man and all the people there to see. Little Lady Mildred herself was brought to the wedding because I'd been under-nurse, and she gave me my white frock, at least her mother did, and said it was her gift, and—there—it's seven-and-thirty years ago. Joe is six-and-thirty, and you are only twenty, but close to twenty-one, being actually fifteen years younger than Joe. My dear,' she interrupted her narrative in order to apologise for this difference, 'I know it is natural there oughtn't to be such a distance between the eldest and the youngest of five. You ought to be thirty at least by now if you had your right. But I couldn't help it because your father, you see, he was generally in the place—the place, you know, where he died at last.'

'You mean he was in prison,' said Valentine stoutly, 'and don't mind about the difference between Joe and me. I daresay I shall get to thirty in good time.'

'In prison then, my dear. Now though we came to London at first to look for work I very soon found out that he hadn't got any regular work, and wouldn't take it if it was offered. Half his time he was away, saying it was country jobs which paid him well, and he'd be away sometimes a month at a spell, after which there would be a month's idleness and doing nothing. But always plenty of money and better living we had than many a gentleman's house.'

'Did he have any relations?'

'No; not any that I ever heard of—some of the books here on my shelves belonged, he said, to his father; and he said his father was a gentleman, but what kind of a gentleman he was to have such a son I'm sure I don't know. Well, Polly, I lived, as they say, in Fool's Paradise; for he never got drunk and he didn't use language and he was not a striker, and though he would only work when he was obliged and left me so much alone, I loved him and thought I was the happiest woman in the world. Happy? Yes, like the innocent lambs in the fields. It was when Joe was a baby of three months that I found out the truth. He got ten years'—Valentine shuddered—'ten years. It was a bad burglary. His box of tools was in our lodgings and a chest full of stolen things, and they talked of trying me along with him, but they didn't. My dear, I never so much as suspected. Ten years! Then I took Joe and all the money that I had and

went away to Hackney Marsh, and took my maiden name again, and began with the washing.'

'And after his ten years he came back again, I suppose?'

'Before then; he came back with a ticket-of-leave, and you may be sure he found me out. I don't know how, but he did; and you might as well try to hide a rabbit from a weasel as try to hide anything from that man. He came back, my dear; and then he lived a very strange life. For he told me he had reformed, and yet he would stay away for a month at a time, and a fine reform it was. He kept quiet when he was at home and gave out to the neighbours he was a seafaring man, and he mostly wore a blue jacket. He never took any of my money and I wouldn't touch none of his, and he never had any meals in the house, but he'd sit in the parlour and read his books, and he'd smoke cigars and drink port wine like a gentleman, all by himself. Twice he went away and didn't come back for eighteen months, so I suppose he'd been took again. But after each spell back he came, and that went on, my dear, for seven long years—seven years—me asking no questions, and him telling no lies, and coming and going just as he pleased. Seven years. Sam came first, and then Claude, and then Melenda. But before you were born, my dear, though not before your name was fixed, which was Marla, as I've told you often, he was took again. It was another burglary, I know, with violence, and he got five-and-twenty years, which Joe said was as good as a lifer, and we needn't expect to see him ever again.'

'Is that all?'

'That's all, my dear. And now you and me have got that secret between us, and we are never to let the two boys nor Melenda know, are we?'

'Never to let the boys know,' said Valentine. 'Oh, poor Claude!'

'If they never find it out it won't matter to them, will it?' said his mother. 'Joe's wife and the children don't know it. Nobody knows it except you and me and Joe. Sometimes I think it's made Joe the good son he's always been to me, because we've had that secret to ourselves.'

'Since he is dead—but is he dead?'

'Yes, he is dead,' she replied quickly; 'Joe heard that for certain. There's no doubt about that.'

'Did he never write to you?'

'Never, and I'll tell you why. It was because he thought my

cottage was such a good hiding place where he could come and go as he pleased and never be suspected at all, and me living under another name. Only mind, I wouldn't have any boxes brought home with him. You see, if he'd written to me the police would have known where to look for him. Why, I've known him—oh, a dozen times—talk to the policeman over the garden palings about himself and his own burglaries as cool as you please.'

'What was his name ?'

'His name was Carey—James Carey. Why, my dear, you are too young to remember it, but thirty years ago the newspapers were full of his name, and the whole country was ringing with his burglaries. They wrote a life of him and sold it for a penny all over London. But of course you've never seen the book.'

No. Valentine had little wish to see that biographical work. Yet there was just a touch of pride in the old woman's mention of that book.

'Look on the shelves, Polly. There are some of his books. You will find his father's name in them. At least he said they were his father's books ; but who knows what his name really was, nor what was his history ?'

Valentine had remarked a row of well-bound books on her first visit ; chiefly, I suppose, because books are not too often met with in a Tottenham almshouse. Now she took them down and examined them. The first book was the 'Divina Commedia di Dante Alighieri,' in Italian ; a beautifully bound copy of a scarce edition, as Valentine knew. One does not usually expect to find rare editions in an almshouse. She passed on to the next on the shelf. This was 'Cupid and Psyche, English'd from the Latin of Apuleius,' quarto, in calf, with the date 1741. Then came 'Froissart's Chronicles,' in four goodly volumes, quarto, and half-calf, the translations of Johnnes. After this came an odd volume of Hutchinson's 'Durham ;' then another odd volume of La Fontaine's 'Contes et Nouvelles,' illustrated very beautifully ; then two or three volumes of Florian's works, magnificently bound. There were others, but Valentine stopped there because she suddenly apprehended the possible meaning of this thing.

If I desired to possess, and intended to show about for the gratification of vanity and the support of my pretensions to gentle birth, something solid and not to be disputed, I should not content myself with the ordinary well-known methods. I might, like some of my neighbours, invent and circulate family anecdotes which unkind friends would proceed to quote and to misrepresent

in a nasty sniggering spirit. I might, also, as they do, adorn my rooms with family portraits which may be had at a reasonable figure, and are effective so long as there exists a friendly disposition to a give-and-take credulity. I might, in addition, exhibit a family pedigree, going back to the Wars of the Roses at least, and beginning with a valiant knight supposed to be connected with a very illustrious house; this, too, may be procured for a small sum, beautifully written on parchment, and adorned with shields. I should certainly stick up, wherever there was room for them, coats of mail, with trophies of spears, shields, bucklers, and pikes, all family heirlooms, and descending in the male line direct from the Crusaders and Coeur de Lion. I should buy old silver mugs, and have my arms engraved upon them with the names of ancestors. These things are all useful in their way, but they want corroboration. Therefore I should proceed to search for, and to buy, old books of the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries, *without names in them*, and in these books I should write the names of my ancestors in a pale brown ink, with the date of acquisition and a remark or two in Latin. Nothing is so effective as Latin. I should arrange them upon a shelf about the average height of the human eye, which is five feet seven inches, and I should say, when my friends took them down curiously, ‘Alas! all that I have been able to save of the old family library. You will find the names of one or two of my people there. See! here is good old Sir Simon, knighted by Queen Bess, at Tilbury.’ There might be jealousies and envyings, and unkind remembrance of one’s grandfather and the shop; but there would be no flouts or jeers, because nothing more effectually proves the antiquity of the House, than old books formerly belonging to ancestors. For modest men it is perhaps sufficient to prove that your grandfather could read Latin and Italian; therefore, books only eighty years of age might be purchased in order to serve that purpose.

Valentine opened the volumes. In each one there was a book plate with a coat of arms, and under the shield in each was written the name of ‘Francis Denison Carey.’ Therefore the said Francis must have known Italian and French at least, and he must have been fond of books and bindings, and illustrations, and he must have taken an interest in county history, and therefore, without doubt, he must have been a gentleman by birth.

‘Were these books my father’s?’ she asked.

‘They were all his, my dear, and his father’s before him.’

‘Who was his father?’

'I don't know, my dear, because he never told me. I've always thought my husband must have been a love child. He left them with me wherever he went. To be sure he couldn't take them with him when he—'

'No,' said Valentine, 'certainly he could not.'

Even an author's works cannot follow him into that place, though they may, and generally do, accompany him to the grave.

'Then his father was a gentleman.'

'So he always said, my dear. But a love child I think he must have been. And he said that he'd got fine relations; and then he'd laugh and boast that he was bringing great honour on the family, though they would do nothing for him.'

'It is strange,' said Valentine. 'Did he never explain how he came to fall so low?'

'No, never; and as to being fallen low he pretended he'd risen high, and couldn't own that his way of living was shameful and disgraceful. "Why," he said, a dozen times after he pretended to be reformed, and could talk Scripture by the half-hour, "why," he said, "it's me against the world: my cleverness against your locks, and your laws, and your police. And I'm the head of them all. There's not a man in the profession but envies me and admires me. Who is there that's got into so many houses as I have? Who's defied the police as I have?" That's the way he used to go on, and as to living by honest work it was nothing but slaving for a slave driver; if he couldn't be a slave driver he wouldn't be a slave.'

'And was he any the richer for his robberies?'

'I don't know, my dear, where the money went, because I never asked. But it went in wickedness, I daresay.'

'Oh!' cried Valentine, stung by a sudden terror. 'Suppose he wasn't dead after all; what misery to see him appear again!'

'He is dead,' said the widow, quietly. 'It was his ghost whose step I heard. Well may he walk and be uneasy. If he wasn't dead he'd ha' been out before now. But I know very well that he's dead and buried. And, oh, Polly, I'm half sorry after all that I told you!'

(*To be continued.*)

Pan and Syrinx.

THERE was a secret vale in Arcady,
 Wherein grew many a flower sweet to smell,
 And many a pleasant shadow of a tree
 Darkened the slant sides of the cup-like dell ;
 And day and night did birds make melody,
 And a clear streamlet slipt through fern and brake,
 Singing until it ceased within a lake.

And often when the drowsy summer-heat
 Had wrought a longing for some little rest,
 Here from the chase did Artemis retreat,
 With bow unloosened and bare snowy breast ;
 And maidens following with buskined feet
 Trooped through the fern that bathed them to the knee,
 While the red staghounds leapt beside in glee.

Now so it happened on a summer's day,
 When all the earth for very heat did swoon,
 That Pan, the god of shepherds, came this way,
 Fleeing the burning arrows of the noon.
 Ah ! little thought he, as he made delay,
 That in this shade his heart should shortly know
 A fiercer arrow than the noon can throw.

Pan saw the place, how sweet it was and fair,
 How filled with all of woodland ravishment,
 How deeply hidden from the flaming air
 That flashed upon the uplands, so he went
 And found a hiding in the fern, and there
 Sank softly into slumber without fears,
 The stream growing ever fainter in his ears.

And now when he a little while had lain
In the dim shadows of delicious sleep,
He seemed, as in a dream, to hear again
The babble of the water softly creep,
Threading his slumber ; then with louder strain
It shaped itself within his drowsy ear
To sound of girlish laughter, silvery, clear.

And Pan, scarce knowing if he were awake,
Lay listening till his ears could doubt no more
That the sweet noise from merry maidens brake,
Down in the little valley's shady core,
And round about the borders of the lake ;
Then did he rise and on his elbow lean,
Peering amid the fern-stalks brown and green.

And straight he saw with his black eyes and bold
That many maidens, thinking no one by,
All raimentless and whiter to behold
Than any lily-flower that floated nigh,
Were bathing in the water clear and cold,
While in the throng the goddess Artemis
Stood laughing softly at their gentle bliss.

And some swam where the waters deepest were,
And some stood in the shallows to the knee,
Appareled in their bright descending hair ;
And some, with just their faces water-free,
Seemed like pale flowers sprinkled here and there ;
And some with hollowed palms in joyous play
Threw each on other showers of glittering spray.

And tunics whiter than the mountain-snows
Lay on the grass, and buskins crimson-seamed,
And many purple quivers, ashen bows ;
And here and there like sleeping serpents gleamed
Gold girdles that the tender waist enclose.
The watching staghounds stretched themselves at ease
In places where the sunshine cleft the trees.

All these things Pan beheld, and yet his sight
 Dwelt little on them, being surely led
 To one maid only with a fixed delight,
 Who seemed the perfect flower of maidenhead,
 And no less lovely than her lady bright.
 Yea, Artemis was not more fair than she,
 Save for a touch of loftier deity.

A freshness, like the heaven's after rain,
 Moved in her shining limbs and golden hair ;
 The crimson of the dawn had set its stain
 Upon her lips that flowered smiles. But there !
 I cheat you in my picture ; words are vain.
 In brief, what seems his love to any man,
 That seemed this maiden to the great god Pan.

With thoughts of her his heart lay blossoming
 As thick as April bank with daffodils ;
 For who shall stand against Love's ordering,
 That knows no lord and doeth what he wills ?
 There is not any may achieve this thing,
 But all must be his vassals, gods and men,
 And lie beneath his feet as Pan lay then.

So Pan denied no pleasure to his eyes,
 Letting them feed upon her ; and his ears
 Did ache with listening for her sweet replies
 Unto the many voices of her peers ;
 And oftentimes he heard amid their cries
 How that they called her Syrinx, at which name
 His pulses fluttered softly like a flame.

No longer than a linnet's song, alas !
 Our joys endure. Even while Pan is stirred
 With perfect happiness, the maidens pass
 From the lake swiftly at their lady's word,
 And gather their white raiment from the grass,
 And being clad therewith move in a band
 Up the vale-side on to the higher land.

Then Pan with close-shut eyes in quiet lay,
Tricking his fancy with a fond deceit
That the bright vision had not slipt away,
And would again before him shine complete,
Were but his eyelids opened to the day.
The memory of the maidens' voices wrought
An echo in the stillness of his thought.

But when the blessed mood he fain would keep,
Through feeding only on itself, had died,
He rose and wandered down the gentle steep
Until he gained the grassy waterside,
And there he walked as one walks in a sleep,
And dreamily beheld the darkening lake,
And stept where she had stept for her sweet sake.

And how he spent the dim and dewy night,
And where, he knew not. This alone he knew,
That, when the next noon glittered in the height,
He couched again amid the fern to view
If Artemis would bring her maidens bright
Unto the valley from the upland flame,
And, even as he watched for them, they came.

Thus on that day Pan had his joy again,
And many days thereafter, till he felt
The very pleasure grow to be a pain,
So great his love was. Then to Zeus he knelt,
Praying to meet in forest, mount, or plain
Syrinx alone, that he might tell his care.
Zeus heard, and shortly granted him his prayer.

It chanced upon a morning when the sun
Had travelled half the way from east to south,
That Pan went slowly through a forest dun,
Bowing his head and murmuring with his mouth,
And often through his lips a sigh would run.
Pale was his face, and well might any know
That love had housed with him and wrought him woe.

The bird upon the bough, as he passed by,
 Hushed not its tune ; the bird within the nest
 Looked upward with a shining trustful eye ;
 The speckled serpent stirred not from its rest ;
 The timid woodmouse took no thought to fly ;
 The wild fawn knew his step and never ran ;
 For all the creatures of the field loved Pan.

Now as amid the darksome wood he strayed,
 Being garmented with sorrow as a cloak,
 He came unto a little grassy glade,
 Where the bright shower of the sunshine broke .
 Through leafage lessened to a mellow shade,
 And lo ! a sudden light leapt in his eyes,
 And Pan stood stricken with a swift surprise.

For scarce a man's length from his feet there lay
 A maiden gathered into sleep's caress ;
 And though, because her face was turned away,
 He might not see her fullest loveliness,
 Yet in his heart a voice made haste to say :
 'This is the answer to thy piteous moan,
 For thou hast found sweet Syrinx all alone.'

Then hardly drawing breath for awe, Pan stole
 Through the green grass towards her with soft stir,
 And watched her as she slept ; and all his soul
 Leaned from his eyes to drink its fill of her ;
 But she unwitting by an oak-tree's bole
 Lay calmly, with her golden tresses shed
 Over the bow and quiver at her head.

'Alas !' thought Pan, 'alas ! it may not be
 That one so fair will hearken to my vows,
 And yield the first-fruits of her lips to me
 Who have these goat-limbs and these hornèd brows.'
 And while he mused on this wise bitterly,
 A teardrop slowly gathered in its place,
 And fell--ah ! foolish Pan !—upon her face.

Then Syrinx started to her feet in haste,
 And looking round with half-awakened sight,
 And seeing a strange figure, swiftly placed
 Her hands on bow and quiver in affright,
 And drawing forth an arrow backward paced,
 Then set it to the string and bent the bow,
 And spake these words in trembling voice and low :

‘ What shape art thou that darest thus to stand
 With horrid looks of love ? Canst thou not see
 That I am one of Artemis’ chaste band,
 And seeing know that never falls on me
 Touch save of maiden with her maiden hand ?
 Who and what art thou, bold of heart and eyes ?
 Speak, but advance not, else this arrow flies.’

‘ Shoot, lady,’ answered Pan, ‘ thou canst not kill.
 O ! if thou couldst, I were content to die
 By those dear hands of thine, and at thy will ;
 But on my nature everlastingly
 The seal of godhead dwells for good and ill.
 Alas ! men hold the best that fate can give,
 For men are doomed to die, but gods to live.

‘ O, Syrinx ! what is love that it can lead
 My feet to follow ever after thine ?
 Full many a maiden laughs by mount and mead
 Whose lips have bloomed the rosier for mine ;
 But I have seen thee, and a noble need
 Springs in me for a higher love than theirs,
 And softens me, and fills my lips with prayers.

‘ Day after day I lurk within the dale,
 Where comes at noon the Lady Artemis
 With all her maidens ; there beneath a veil
 Of grass and fern I steal a short sweet bliss
 In watching thee ; and when the day grows pale,
 And thou art gone, I walk by wood and plain,
 Longing for noon and wakeful with love’s pain.

' With bootless sacrifice the shepherd-man
 Offers the tender youngling on the height ;
 With bootless prayer he lifts his voice to Pan,
 And still the grey wolf robs the fold by night ;
 For Love on all my duties sets a ban,
 And thou art more than all. O turn thy face,
 And give me but one little word of grace !

' Thou wilt not answer ? O awake ! awake !
 And stand not thus with strange, affrighted eyes,
 As one that sees a poison she must take !
 Quick ! edge thy tongue with bitterest replies !
 Seek out a deadlier venom than the snake !
 Stab all my heart with words that sting and hiss !
 Still but to hear thee speak them will be bliss.'

And Syrinx as she listened paler grew ;
 The bow dropped from her hand, her strength all died ;
 While him the fervour of his passion drew
 With this last utterance closer to her side ;
 But when his voice ceased, then her strength anew
 Flashed through her limbs, and with a wild amaze
 She shrieked, and fled along the woodland ways.

A little while Pan stood as lost in doubt,
 Then over-mastered by his inward pain
 Followed upon her steps, with many a shout
 Imploring her to turn to him again,
 And hear the story of his love told out.
 But Syrinx, quickening as his voice came near,
 Sped ever onward with great sobs of fear.

The trees above her bowed themselves to set
 Their branching fingers in her wind-blown hair,
 The bracken strove to hold her in its net,
 The very flowers laid a tender snare ;
 The bramble tore her limbs with purple fret,
 In memory whereof its bloom alway
 Hath borne a bloodstain even from that day.

At times the shadows darkened round her flight ;
At times beneath a sunny rift she flew,
And glittered for a moment clear and white ;
While ever following with fix'd view
Pan ached at heart for love and cruel slight,
And felt through panting breast and straining limb
The fierceness of the chase steal over him.

And now a warmer light began to shine,
A fresher breath to travel with the breeze ;
And now they fled beyond the forest-line,
Away from the dark shadow of the trees ;
And now they crossed a field of dappled kine,
That lazily looked upward from the grass
In sleepy wonderment to see them pass.

A river at the far end of the mead
Through many a rush went seaward hurrying ;
And thither Syrinx hastened with all speed,
For thereof was her father Ladon king,
Who for his love's sake would befriend her need.
Into the stream she leapt and never stayed,
And, while Pan watched her from the banks, thus prayed :

' O father Ladon, in whose streams I stand,
If ever the vowed tresses of my hair
Have duly fallen on thee from this hand,
If for thy daughter thou hast any care,
And any for the chaste and holy band
That swear to love not, hear me now and save,
And make me as these reeds that fringe thy wave ! '

And, when she ended, Pan crying out amain,
' O Ladon, hearken not ! ' rushed in the stream
And cast his arms about her all in vain,
For she had vanished even as a dream
That mocks the clutches of the wakened brain.
So Syrinx was not ; only in her stead
Green reeds grew upward from the river's bed.

Alas ! what sadder thing can any know
 Than to have waited many weary days
 For laggard bliss, and at its first faint show
 To be himself the very sword that slays,
 And strikes through all his hopes the deadly blow ?
 And this Pan felt, and bitterly he railed
 Upon himself, and loud for Syrinx wailed.

And over him lamenting sank the sun,
 And over him all night the pale moon wheeled,
 And then the dawn broke ; still he lay as one
 Whom death has stricken lonely in the field,
 Save for a murmur now and then begun
 Of ‘ O to be as man and die this day,
 For love, the life of life, is gone away ! ’

And while he sorrowed in this heavy case,
 He felt the air to sudden ripples fanned
 By a soft wave of pinions round the place,
 And on his shoulder fell a gentle hand,
 Whereat Pan looking up with joyless face
 Beheld the wing-shod Hermes smiling near,
 Who in the gods’ tongue spake these words of cheer :

‘ Arouse thee, Pan, and list what doom I bring !
 Thou askest death, and death shall come to thee ;
 And it shall chance that sailors wandering
 Along the paths of the Ionian sea
 Shall hear about the fall of evening,
 And nigh to Paxos, a loud voice of dread
 Shout over land and sea : “ Great Pan is dead.”

‘ But many seasons first shall flower and fade,
 And thou hast yet a wondrous art to win.
 Now hearken to me ; thou must rise and wade
 Into the stream and pluck the reeds therein
 From Syrinx sprung, then set them in due grade
 With joints of wax, and down them softly blow,
 So shalt thou find a solace for thy woe.’

Then Hermes to the heavenly houses went.

And all according to his words did Pan,
And when throughout the reeds a breath he sent
A melody along the hollows ran,
Wherein the transformed Syrinx sweetly blent
With what Pan breathed of sadness ; so was wrought
A richer tune than ever throbbed in thought.

And thus Pan's sorrow bloomed to great delight
Which he without that sorrow had not known ;
And through all Aready by vale and height
Pan piped those peerless love-songs of his own,
And oft at noon the shepherd, oft at night,
Would hear a sweetness with the wind go by,
And murmur to himself that Pan was nigh.

And some there are who in these latter days
Have thought to hear Pan piping on the hill
His tender ditties and his love-lorn lays,
For Fancy ever worketh at her will,
And leads the heart of man in many ways ;
Yet in the end it fell as Hermes said,
And Pan was gathered to the silent dead.

CARYL BATTERSBY.

A Cruise with the Sandy Hook Pilots.

A PILOT instinctively inspires interest in the breasts of a great majority of his fellow-men, even though his sphere of action is limited to the channels and shoals of some creek into which he guides a half-dozen schooners or sloops each year. As one watches him standing at the helm of some black-sailed old craft, at one moment bearing off to clear that sand-spit, and now luffing to reach by this bunch of rocks, at each turn telling you how many feet, or perhaps inches, of water you have underneath your keel, the conviction forces itself upon you that here is a man whose experience would be worth knowing. You see the evidences of much exposure to sun and rain in the copper-coloured complexion, and his voice sounds as though each of a hundred fogs had left a sample of itself in his throat. His dress, which impresses you as likely to be highly uncomfortable under almost any circumstances, shows a sovereign contempt for all conventionality. His language—perhaps the less said about his language the better—is ornate, but forcible.

This is the pilot of the sea novel, of Cooper and Mr. Clark Russell, and the type can doubtless still be found off many ports of Great Britain and the United States. But the change from sail to steam has wrought a corresponding change in the habits of the pilots of our larger seaports, and those who have entered New York on one of the great European ‘mailers’ have doubtless been surprised, when they were signalled some five hundred miles at sea, to pick up a man whose neat, perhaps jaunty, dress and evident enjoyment of the luxuries of the steamer was as unromantic as possible.

There are now about thirty boats, commissioned under the laws of New York and New Jersey, constantly employed in carrying pilots to sea and putting them on board in-coming vessels. These boats are schooner rigged, of the stanchest build, and from fifty to seventy-five tons burthen. Each carries a number of

pilots—from five to seven usually—who own her, and to whom she is almost as dear as wife or daughter. Years ago it was the custom for an incoming vessel to pick up her pilot on the bar off the mouth of the harbour; but the rapid increase in the trade of the port, together with the increased competition among the pilots, combined to render a more extensive service imperative. Accordingly the present system was introduced; still the pilot did not venture a great way to sea, and the majority of incoming craft were boarded within fifty miles of Sandy Hook. As the proportion of steamers to sailing craft, however, still increased, and the great transatlantic lines began to run their ships with almost perfect regularity, following established and well-known routes, the practice of ‘steamer hunting’ gradually came into vogue among the crews of the newer and larger boats.

The advantages of a steamer over a sailing vessel from a pilot’s standpoint are sufficiently obvious. He can board a steamer down on the edge of the Gulf Stream, and, whatever the weather may be, reckon with tolerable certainty upon reaching port in forty-eight hours; whereas another pilot, boarding a sailing vessel within one hundred miles of Sandy Hook, may be delayed a week by calms or head winds—perhaps, if it is winter, may be blown off the coast altogether. Then, too, the steamers as a rule are of deeper draught than the sailing vessels, and consequently pay larger fees. Hence there have come to be two well-recognised cruising grounds for the boats. The one along the New Jersey coast, where the southern trade is met, and where barques, brigs, and three-masted schooners are boarded, is frequented by the older and smaller boats. The other is the eastern ground, upon which the pilots meet the European trade, and this is the route which calls for the stanchest vessels and the longest cruises.

During last summer, thanks to the kindness of one of the New York Pilot Commissioners, I was able to procure a berth on Pilot-boat No. 22, and the eighteen days’ voyage which I made in her was sufficiently interesting to warrant recital.

Eight o’clock on the last Monday in July found me at the Pilot headquarters in Burling Slip, where I learned that the *Washington*—for this was No. 22’s name—was lying at Staten Island, having arrived from sea the previous evening, and that she would sail again in a few hours.

Soon her company of pilots began to arrive, and the grip of the hand and hearty welcome which they gave me as we were introduced, augured well for our future acquaintance. The

eleven o'clock boat took us to Staten Island, and after a delay of an hour or two I was packed into the yawl with three of the pilots, two boys from the boat's crew, and a quantity of supplies, and rowed off to the *Washington*. Another trip had to be made after the remaining pilots; but at last, some time after one o'clock, all were safely on board, and we got under way, beating down through the Narrows against a spanking south-easter which rendered topsails a superfluity. Though the wind was ahead, a strong tide under foot carried us rapidly through the Lower Bay, Sandy Hook was passed, and we began to get full benefit of the south-easter and the consequent rough water.

A short delay was caused by putting mail on board the *Scotland* lightship—familiar to yachtsmen as the starting-point in the ocean races of the New York Yacht Club—after which the *Washington*'s prow was turned eastward and we were off to sea.

Meanwhile the supper bell rings, and we go below willingly enough, for already the sea air has made an impression upon our appetites—an impression which, by the way, lasted almost without interruption during the entire cruise.

The *Washington* carries six pilots, and the group which we make sitting together in the prettily furnished cabin is sufficiently interesting. My own seat is on the leeward side of the table, and I am obliged to hold tightly to the form on which I sit, with my knees crooked round its edge, in a position which will be instantly understood by anyone who has been in small craft on rough water. On my right sits the captain, one of the oldest pilots on board—a big, red-cheeked, good-humoured man, who has been in the pilot-boats almost from boyhood. One of the kindest-hearted of a proverbially kind-hearted race of men, he spares no effort to make you comfortable, offers his bunk for your accommodation, and beguiles what would otherwise be tedious half-hours on deck with the recital of his varied experiences. His slight brogue and a certain charming inconsistency, which allows him to advance some half-dozen theories to account for a given phenomenon, blissfully unconscious that each is fatal to the other five, betray his Milesian origin.

Directly opposite the captain sits a pilot whose light hair and eyes, together with a complexion upon which exposure seems to have made scarce any impression, mark him unmistakably for a Scandinavian. A Swede, as I afterward learned, he was a sailor for years before procuring his pilot's licence, and is one of the keenest-sighted and most clear-headed men in the crew—a trifle

reckless perhaps, but so thorough a seaman that no ill consequences have ever resulted.

At the Swede's right there sits a good-natured, plump, sandy-bearded German, and next him a Dane, whose easy-going, phlegmatic disposition and short experience—short, that is, in a pilot's judgment—cause him to be looked upon with some disfavour by one or two of the older men. He is large and well-favoured, with ruddy cheeks, twinkling eyes, and a delightful brogue, quite unlike the broken English of the ordinary Germans.

Next comes a man in whom the veriest land-lubber would recognise an old salt; broad shoulders and a nut-brown complexion where the skin is not covered by a thick dark beard and moustache, vast hands with a heavy ring upon one middle finger, a certain pose of the head, which is carried slightly forward as though the eye were minutely scanning the horizon, while the hat when in the open air is worn so that the view aloft may be as little obstructed as possible, all mark the seaman. His heavy, almost stolid, features and slightly broken English proclaim him a German, though of quite a different type from his compatriot to whom I have just referred.

Across the table and at my left is the sixth of the pilots, and the only one who can boast of American parentage. Even he, however, was not born in the United States, but is a native of the province of New Brunswick. An athletic medium-sized man of forty or thereabouts, who has followed the sea ever since as a boy he shipped for a three years' cruise to the East Indies in a New Bedford whaler, he is one of the most intelligent men on board, has read to a considerable extent, is an agreeable talker with enough personal experience to give his conversation weight, and a very skilful pilot.

On going on deck the next morning I found that we had been beating to the eastward all night, and were out of sight of land. Hull down astern could be seen a rival pilot-boat, the *Negus*, which had left Staten Island a short time after us, and been following in our wake all night. She was a particularly fast craft, and it was a source of no small delight to the pilots that at present the *Washington* seemed to be distancing her.

Our course was nearly enough parallel with the Long Island shore to bring us within sight of land during the day; but at night, when Shinnecock light disappeared, we could feel ourselves fairly at sea. Meanwhile a bright look-out was kept for steamers, and during the first few days several were signalled, but all had

picked up pilots farther at sea. It began to be evident that a long cruise was before us, and we settled down into a regular way of life, whose routine was something like this: Coffee, 4.30 A.M.; breakfast, 8; dinner, 12 or 1; coffee, 3; supper, 6 or 7; bed at 8. For several days of the voyage the above were the principal events in our lives.

On Thursday we were abreast of the dreaded Nantucket shoals, and passed over Asia Rip with hazy weather and a quiet sea, little enough like the awful breakers which mark the spot in the winter gales. Just at night a steamer was sighted away to the southward, and instantly all was excitement. Evidently she was too far off for us to intercept her, but perhaps if her attention were attracted she would haul. Unfortunately the wind was very light, while a fog bank was close upon us. Up goes the big blue flag, however, to the *Washington's* maintopmast head, and to our joy the steamer changes her course and heads towards us. But, alas! it is almost night, and the fog which has been haunting us gradually settles down until each vessel is hidden from the other. They are still miles apart, but the pilots, loth to lose their prize, order out the little brass cannon from its hiding-place abaft the mainmast, and keep it roaring away vigorously for the next half-hour. But all to no purpose; the steamer's fog signal, faint at best, grows fainter and fainter; she has headed off upon her course, and we must give her up. The sombre night, grey with the thick and soaking fog which always hangs about these shoals, settles down upon our disappointment, and we creep into our bunks hoping for better luck on the morrow.

And with the morrow better luck comes. About five o'clock we rush on deck to find the little cannon bang! bang! banging away into the densest of fog banks, out of which at intervals there comes a hoarse growl. A steamer this time, no doubt, and close at hand. We draw nearer and nearer, each feeling its way cautiously, until at length the fog, finding that it cannot keep us asunder, determines to retire, which it does by slow degrees. Every eye is strained into the retreating mist, until at last one calls out, 'There she is!' And, sure enough, there lies the long, narrow, black hull of a large steamer some sixty or eighty rods away. Over goes the yawl with two boys and a pilot, who is soon on board the steamer, which proves to be the *Glenavon*, bound to New York from one of the Chinese ports with the first cargo of the new crop of tea.

As it is dead calm we improve the opportunity to fish. The

heavy deep-sea tackle is produced, and a large codfish hook baited with salt mackerel dropped over the side. The water is so deep—from thirty-five to forty fathoms—that a very slight forward motion of the vessel will keep the hook off the bottom; but this morning we are able to hold on, and before the breakfast bell rings the Dane and myself have secured several haddock, one codfish, and one or two ling. There is little sport in this style of fishing, as the game after being hooked show scarce any sign of life, and the work of hauling them through some two hundred and fifty feet of water is fatiguing in the extreme.

After breakfast down comes the fog again, but about noon another steamer is heard and signalled. We can hear her churning the water as she comes directly toward us, but not a sign of her presence can be detected by the keenest eye in the crew. It gives one a certain eerie feeling to know that there is a great steamer, which could crush the little pilot-boat like an egg-shell, bearing down upon it, perhaps within one hundred and fifty yards, yet as effectually hidden from sight as though a solid wall intervened.

At last the New Brunswicker, pointing into the fog bank in the direction of the sound, calls our attention to a little line of white upon the surface of the ocean; it can only be dimly seen by straining the eye to the utmost, but is coming toward us. Yes, there is no longer any doubt. *It is the white water under the steamer's bows;* and now, as she approaches, we can make out the dark outline of her hull.

In this case, as in that of the morning, the fog, foiled in its attempt to keep us apart, now retreated, and the big German, who had been hastily donning his white shirt, best suit of clothes, and polished boots, was soon on his way to port in the steamer *Yoxford*, of London, bound to New York with a cargo of fruit, as the pilots conjectured from the appearance of her hatches.

It seems as though pilots were protected by a special Providence, for they invite destruction in the dense fogs which are always found in certain parts of their cruising grounds by placing themselves as directly in the path of steamers as their calculations will allow. Of course this is necessary, as otherwise the steamers would slip by without their knowledge, and the danger is therefore reckoned as ‘all in the day’s work.’

Our captain told me that on one occasion, in quiet weather and a dense fog, the pilots who were on deck suddenly heard some one

say, ‘Mr. Walker, you may let that foreyard go a little higher, sir.’ They looked at one another in amazement, for the words, spoken in an ordinary tone, seemed uttered close at hand, though nothing was to be seen. In a moment, however, the fog lifted a little, and they saw a large ship close aboard of them—so close that they had been able to hear the captain giving an order to one of his mates.

The next forenoon we found ourselves as usual in a dense fog, and another steamer passed so close upon our starboard hand that we could distinctly hear her rushing through the water. The pilots recognised her as a Frenchman by her peculiar whistle, but she did not stop.

Just at night we experienced the mortification of seeing the great Cunarder *Servia*, which was sighted away to the eastward, headed directly toward us, haul out of her course some six or eight miles to take a pilot out of our rival, the *Negus*, which had been lucky enough to slip by the *Washington*, thanks to the light and variable winds of the last day or two. This was the beginning of a week of grievously hard luck. We had now outrun the fog banks, and were to have a taste of Gulf Stream weather. The next day, Sunday, was pleasant, but at night it clouded up and blew a brisk breeze from the south-east, which freshened during the evening. I stood a long time at the top of the companion ladder as the darkness settled down, and there was a greyness in the whole atmosphere, a sort of murky look upon the water, which, with the rising wind and sea and the occasional cry of a stormy petrel, made a world of sight and sound not easily forgotten.

At one o’clock we tumble up on deck to find the schooner, which we had left quietly hove to and sedately bowing to the increasing swell, now tearing through a nasty choppy sea with a violence that churns the water under the lee into a mass of foam. A steamer has been sighted, and every effort is being made to get in her way before she can pass us. The great signal torch is flashing and flaring as a sailor swings it back and forth, so that its light may fall upon the mainsail with its big black number. At last the steamer across whose path we are now running shows some sign of recognition, for she changes her course and stops her engines. Splash! the yawl is overboard, and the Danish pilot, dressed in the jauntiest of costumes, with two of the sailors, has put out and is attempting to reach her, when, to our intense disgust and disappointment, her engines are started, and she

moves on her course, utterly ignoring the little yawl which is struggling gallantly through the troubled sea, its bright light now shining plainly from the crest of a wave, now disappearing entirely as it plunges into the trough. We come about to pick up the boat with its wet crew, and the pilots discuss the situation with many expletives indicative of deep disgust.

It blew hard all the next day until at night we were hove to with three reefs in our mainsail, and the little schooner was jumping wildly—now up, as one of the great rollers caught her under the bows, then down into the trough until it seemed as though the whole prow must be buried in the next wave. And occasionally the bowsprit was caught for an instant, only, however, to be released the next as the buoyant little vessel threw her bows skyward, shaking the spray from her wet head sails. On this night also a steamer was signalled but did not stop, though the yawl was again sent out into the wildest sea that I ever saw a small boat weather. The refusal of the steamer to take a pilot was explained when it was discovered that she was the *Wisconsin*, of the Guion Line.

Some years since, the *Alaska*, of that line, was signalled at night by a pilot-boat, whose yawl with a pilot and two sailors was sent out to her, while the schooner lay close at hand. By some mistake—just what seems never to have been satisfactorily explained—the yawl was swamped under the quarter of the steamer, which then ran into and sunk the schooner, cutting her through as though she had been pasteboard. The pilots' version of the story was never heard, as I believe not one was left from either the schooner or the yawl to tell the tale. Since that time the Guion steamers have not been allowed to take their pilots at night.

During the next few days we made our greatest 'easting,' reaching long. $63^{\circ} 58'$, which is 10° —450 miles in this latitude—to the eastward of New York, and as far from home as the pilots thought it profitable to go. We therefore turned back and cruised about, now running westward, now lying to, then perhaps sailing eastward again for five or six hours. One morning the British steamer *Nymphaea* (of North Shields, I think) was signalled, but she was bound to Philadelphia, and therefore our services were not required. The pilots began to think themselves in exceptionally hard luck, for they had now been nearly two weeks at sea, and yet but two of their number had boarded steamers.

On Saturday morning, however, the encouraging cry of ‘Smoke, ho!’ was heard from the masthead, and though the steamer was at a great distance the pilots soon identified her as the *Circassia*. The signal flag having been hoisted, every eye is strained to see whether it is answered. Gradually the tall masts, which have been climbing yard by yard over the horizon, swing into line, and we know that the steamer has hauled and is bearing down upon us. The sea is very quiet, and she comes on at a tremendous rate, stopping her engines as she gets abeam of the pilot-boat.

The young Dane has again arrayed himself and been sent out for a third attempt at boarding—this time with better success.

The next morning brings us a south-easter, which increases in strength as the forenoon wears on, and soon succeeds in raising a lively sea. An unusual number of sailing craft are seen, and before breakfast the Cunarder *Gallia* is boarded by the New Brunswicker, and two hours later our genial captain is put on board the *Jersey City*. Meanwhile the breeze has freshened into a stiff blow, and we lie to during the remainder of the day and through the night in order to intercept a French steamer, the *St. Laurent*, which should be along within the next twenty-four hours.

In the morning the wind has dropped, though a big swell is still running, which shows that it has been blowing hard to the eastward of us. To our great disappointment, when the man at the masthead reports the expected steamer, she proves to bear almost south-east of us instead of east, as we had hoped. This means that it is impossible for the schooner to intercept her with this light wind, and our only chance is to attract her attention in the hope that she may haul out of her course. Every effort is made, but all to no purpose, and we resign ourselves to another period of waiting. But relief comes from an unexpected quarter. A large American ship with all her skysails set has been lying to the leeward of us, seeming scarcely to move before the breath of wind, which is just strong enough to slightly ruffle the surface of the heavy swells.

The interest in the steamer having abated, the glasses are turned in the direction of the ship, when, to the disgust of the Swede, who is the only pilot now left on board, and the secret joy of the crew, who are anxious to return to port, it is noticed that her fore skysail has been clewed up, and that a jack—the signal for a pilot—is fluttering in its place. To disregard that signal would subject a pilot to a fine of 50 dollars, and so the *Washington* is headed toward the ship, while the Swede, groaning over his ill-

fortune, proceeds to exchange his 'sea-togs' for the regulation white shirt, 'store clothes,' and billycock hat. And no doubt he deserves some sympathy. He has been out of port two weeks, has just missed a steamer, and is now obliged to go on board a 'square rigger' almost four hundred miles from New York. It will be scarcely possible for him to reach port in time to sail with his comrades upon their next cruise; for although the schooner must traverse the same distance as the ship—unless, indeed, she go to Newport, R.I., which is sometimes done to save time—yet, with the light southerly and westerly winds which will probably prevail after yesterday's blow, she will not only outsail her, but will be able to 'lay her course' while the larger vessel is obliged to beat.

Meanwhile we are gradually drawing near the ship, climbing up a watery hill apparently, for as one looks ahead and sees but one slope of the successive swells, it is almost impossible to convince the eye that the ship in the distance is not upon a higher level than our schooner.

As we approach, the yards upon the ship's mainmast swing round, and the sails, caught aback by the wind, soon stop her headway. The Swede goes on board, and apparently attempts to persuade the captain to allow him to return, but without avail. The yawl comes back without him, the 'boat-keeper' takes command of the schooner, and we are homeward bound. The wind is so very light that the ship—she is the *Wm. H. Smith*, 1,900 tons burthen, thirty days out from Liverpool—thanks to her lofty royals and skysails, outsails the schooner for an hour or two; but in the afternoon a breeze springs up and we slip past her, sailing nearly three feet for her two, and heading several points nearer the wind.

During two quiet days we slipped peacefully along through an almost glassy sea, for the wind was aloft, and our progress was almost entirely due to the light upper sails.

On the afternoon of Wednesday the wind freshened, and at sundown was blowing a glorious breeze from the southward, which soon brought down our big fore-topmast staysail, following it not long after with both topsails. Under this shortened sail, however, the little schooner did such noble work that we made Sandy Hook lightship about half-past nine the next morning, ran up the bay with a fair wind, and at noon dropped anchor off Staten Island upon the same ground that we had left eighteen days before.

EDWARD M. CHAPMAN.

‘Black Crows :’

AN EPISODE OF ‘OLD VAN DIEMEN.’

HE had never heard of the ‘enthusiasm of humanity’—the expression was not in fashion in his day, and, if it had been, I doubt whether he would have understood it ; for he was only an Australian stock-rider, a ‘Sydney cornstalk’ born, who had never read a book in his life except the Bible, and perhaps not very much of that, and was more familiar with bush craft and horsemanship than with abstract principles of any sort. Yet, if actions prove anything, the thing which that famous phrase has come to stand for was not altogether unknown to him.

It was in Van Diemen’s Land—we hadn’t heard of Tasmania in those days—that I made Jack Hepburn’s acquaintance. At that time he was in the employ of my friend Allardyce on the Emu Plains, and had been so for about two years—the only free stockman on the run. Allardyce—himself one of the finest fellows that ever stepped—had unbounded confidence in him, and looked to him as a sort of sheet-anchor in the midst of the endless troubles and annoyances arising out of a supply of convict labour. He was a tough, muscular, black-bearded fellow, a trifle over six feet, and fairly good-looking ; active in his movements, but slow and very sparing of his speech, and not particularly remarkable for anything unless it were his scrupulous honesty and strict truthfulness.

I had left the colony when the incident happened which I am about to relate. I heard various accounts of it afterwards, and the substance of them, as nearly as I can give it, is pretty much as follows.

There were four of them up in the bush at the hut known as ‘Dicey’s,’ one clear January evening. Dicey, the hut-keeper—a grizzled old sinner, popularly reported to have been one of the first arrivals in Sydney, though I have reason to believe that this

is incorrect—was busy cooking inside ; Jack Hepburn sat on a stump a little way from the door, plaiting a new lash for his stock whip ; and the other two—‘hands’ both of them, and of a pretty bad type—lounged in the doorway, chewing tobacco and carrying on a low growling conversation.

Now Jack was a good-natured, kindly fellow enough ; but he never forgot the difference between himself and these men, and never allowed them to forget it ; and, naturally enough, they detested him. No doubt this was scarcely Christian charity, but Jack was not a perfect character—very far from it—and, in justice to him, it must be remembered that, in spite of natural prejudices, in his own phrase ‘he never liked to be rough on a hand as wanted to behave hisself decently,’ which, on the whole, was not the deepest desire of the two specimens before us. But even a worm will turn, and, though they doubtless fully deserved the curt contempt and lordly superciliousness with which he treated them, they didn’t like it.

All this by the way. Jack was not paying any particular attention to the dialogue going on in the doorway—it was not his habit to take an interest in the conversation of those gentlemen, which, it must be allowed, showed a certain monotony—when his ear was caught by a much-emphasised assertion as to the shooting of crows. He knew that, in their dialect, this word was applied to bronze-coloured and featherless bipeds oftener than to black and feathered ones ; and he was well acquainted with the reckless disregard of life—not confined to convicts either—shown towards the unlucky natives of the island. It was a curious trait in Jack Hepburn’s character—considering the universal and deeply rooted prejudice of all colonial Englishmen—that his naturally strong sense of justice suffered no bias or abrogation where ‘black fellows’ were concerned. Perhaps his experience of convict whites and his sojourn among the wild tribes of the bush (I know his wanderings had been wide and adventurous before he settled on Allardyce’s run) had shaken his belief in the comparative worthlessness of the latter. However it may be accounted for—and I am not writing an analytic dissertation on his character ; I am only telling his story—such was the fact. And he knew that there was a tribe of natives not very far off ; he had seen their tracks in the bush that very day.

So he listened, without seeming to hear, while one of the two—a lowering, sullen-faced creature, with small eyes, a retreating forehead, and cruel jaw—gave a circumstantial statement of a

wanton murder committed some months before. Facts of the kind may be found in plenty by those who care to read the cruel record.

Then he looked up and said in his quietest tones—

‘Hawk Williams, that might do well enough on the Tamar, but I tell you I won’t have it *here*.’

‘Hawk’ Williams gave a brutal laugh ; the other man stared and whistled.

‘What . . . call hev *you* got to meddle ? Who the . . . made *you* boss of this here consarn ? ’

‘Call or no call, I *won’t*—*have it*,’ said Jack Hepburn, giving a twist to the end of his whip-lash.

‘How’ll you stop it ? ’ sneered Williams. ‘There’s no law agin the killin’ of black crows, is there ? Meredith on the Tamar was glad enough to have ‘em picked off, and so will Allardyce be for that matter.’

‘I know better’n that,’ said Jack Hepburn, and finished his work reflectively, without lifting his eyes, for his soul was stirred within him. He knew that the man’s words were on the whole perfectly true—that he had no force of law or public opinion to back him ; that he had no authority over these men to compel them to refrain from such a deed should they wish to do it ; that Allardyce, who he felt sure would be on his side, was miles away at the station, and that he had heard Allardyce’s partner, Kearney, treat such things as the merest trifles. And, as he thought, the slowly smouldering fires of his disgust and indignation burnt through their embers and leapt up into words.

‘I don’t know,’ he said slowly, looking full in ‘Hawk’ Williams’s evil face—‘I don’t know about the law and what folks think ; but I *do* know this : that if I saw a chap doin’ as you said just now —firin’ on them poor helpless critters, women, kids, and all, for pure sport—I’d just shoot that fellow where he stood.’

‘I’d like to see you,’ laughed Hawk. ‘I always knew you were a mean-spirited cuss, but you’d never dare that. I’ve a good mind to try. Hallo ! ’

Jack Hepburn turned and followed the direction of his eye. His own, trained to the bush, at once detected the slight movement in the scrub, and knew what caused it. Williams had turned into the hut.

‘Look, Hawk ! ’ said Cass, the other convict, who had not as yet spoken, seeing him come out again with a loaded gun in his hand. ‘Sh ! over there ! ’

'So it is,' said Hawk, taking aim.

Jack Hepburn's rifle lay beside him; he took it in his hand and stood up.

'Hawk Williams, I give you fair warning. Put that thing down.'

'Not for you, you cantin' sneak. You darsn't shoot a white man. *That's* a hangin' matter.'

'I know it is. If you fire I'll shoot you dead and swing for it.'

They both stood motionless, with guns cocked, Williams watching the edge of the scrub, Hepburn watching Williams. None of the natives ventured out into the open ground; they had learnt to be cautious in the neighbourhood of white men's huts, and perhaps the bright eyes peering through the branches awhile ago had seen the shining gun-barrels. So perhaps five minutes passed, and then—it might have been a bough stirred by a puff of wind, or a kangaroo rat passing through the underbrush; but something moved, and Hawk Williams fired into the scrub.

As the shot snapped there was a shriek, and a brown figure darted into the open, a good way farther off, but still within rifle range, and fled up the hill. Jack Hepburn still stood like a statue. Perhaps Williams thought he was hesitating; anyhow he fired his second barrel. The brown figure dropped.

Then Jack Hepburn levelled the rifle that had never missed fire yet, and without speaking a word shot Hawk Williams through the heart.

He had taken the dead man up and laid him in his bed-place inside the hut, unhelped by the others, who seemed struck dumb with consternation and perplexity. Old Dicey, the cooler of the two, was fairly puzzled as he vainly searched his memory for a parallel case. Both kept outside the door, stealing uneasy glances every now and then at the silent man who sat, with his head in his hands, beside what had been Hawk Williams, as though they thought he might suddenly rise and kill them too. But he never moved, and as the dusk stole up and the air grew damp and chilly, they were fain to turn in and seek their blankets.

Only once he looked up.

'Mates,' he said, 'when does Allardyce come round? Is it to-morrow?'

It was a point of etiquette with him to mark his status as a

free man by never speaking of 'Mr. Allardyce,' as they were obliged to do—within hearing of authorities.

They looked at each other and muttered 'Yes.'

'All right,' he answered, then returned to his brooding watch, and so they found him still seated when they awoke in the morning.

He stayed about the hut all day. 'You chaps might think I wanted to cut an' run,' he remarked, 'and I want to be on hand when he comes. You can tell him what you please.'

It was afternoon when Allardyce arrived. He must have met with Cass on the way and heard something already, for he galloped up in frantic haste and threw himself from his horse, crying, 'Hepburn, what's this?'

'It's quite true, sir,' said Jack, quietly. 'Come along,' and he led the way into the hut.

Old Dicey met them in the doorway with a high-pitched and voluble story about a quarrel in which Hawk Williams had not been to blame; but Allardyce pushed past him and stood with Hepburn beside the dead man.

'I shot him, sir, you may see, and I'll show you why. I gave him fair warning, and I told him I was ready to take the consequences. Will you come this way?'

They went down the hill together and into the scrub, and Jack parted the branches and showed him a copper-coloured corpse lying there on its face, the limbs twisted and hands clenched in the terrible death agony, and the hole where the bullet had torn its jagged course from back to breast.

'I shot him straight,' said Jack, as if to himself. 'He didn't have to suffer like *that*.'

But Duncan Allardyce turned his white face away and leaned his hand heavily on Jack's shoulder.

'That's not all,' said Jack, looking at him narrowly. 'But—'

'Go on,' said Allardyce.

They went on to a spot where there was an opossum-skin rug spread out on the grass; and Jack Hepburn lifted it up and showed a dead woman—a slight-limbed creature scarcely more than a girl—with a child in her arms.

'There!' he said hoarsely. 'He knew that; he could see it well enough from where we stood. And if it were to do over again I'd do it. And if it's hanging—why, I'll hang.'

Duncan Allardyce turned to him and took both his hands.

'God help us both, Jack!' he cried. 'I think you're right.'

It was a hanging matter. The trial created rather a sensation at the time, and it ended as might have been expected, seeing that the counsel Allardyce engaged failed to establish the plea of lunacy, the only extenuating circumstance the court would have admitted. Kearney was not inclined to ruin himself in trying to save a fool who would meddle with what was no business of his. He and Allardyce quarrelled and parted over that affair, and the latter spent his money alone and to no purpose. He was with Jack Hepburn the night before he died. They had always liked each other, but those last few weeks had drawn them together strangely, and they parted as dearest friends do.

The time was nearly gone. They had sat side by side, silent, holding each other's hands—how the consciousness of the fast-slipping minutes strikes those dumb who have so much to say!—for the last time; then at last Allardyce said—

'Is anything troubling you, Jack?'

He looked at him with sad, perplexed eyes, and spoke slowly and hesitatingly—

'Maybe—I don't know whether it was wrong; I don't want to say it wasn't.' He laid his head down on Allardyce's shoulder and went on in a hoarse, hurried whisper, 'Parson says I can't get to heaven if I don't repent—and I—I can't say I'm—sorry for a thing—when I know I'd do it again—if it happened so . . . and I wouldn't like to get in by telling a lie—if such a thing could be. I . . . oh! I don't know how to tell you what I mean . . . and that chap just riles me . . . and I don't want to feel angry with anyone . . .'

'I think I know,' said Allardyce, and his voice was very low and gentle. 'Dear old lad, I'm not good; I can't talk to you as—as one ought; but I understand what you are feeling. Don't you mind what he tells you. God is just, and He understands, if no one else can. Go straight to Him, and ask Him, if you were wrong, to give you grace to see it . . . though, as He hears me—I believe you did a right and a noble thing. . . .' His voice choked with the sob in his throat, but the loving clasp of his arms said all that words could not.

'He said I had no right . . .'

'Don't you believe it! God is greater and juster than he! Oh, Jack, my boy!'

'There, they're coming. You'll have to go.'

'Good night—good-bye. Kiss me—there! good-bye! Don't forget I'm—thinking of you to the last.'

'Don't fret yourself about me—don't! Good-bye, Allardyce. God bless you!'

The key turned in the lock and the door swung on its hinges, letting in a broad band of light from the turnkey's lamp.

'Time's up, sir.'

• • • • •

I do not judge him; I have only told his story.

A. WERNER.

The Hypocrite of Fiction.

OF all the stock characters of fiction which turn up from generation to generation, without any variety save of costume and phraseology, one of the most constantly attractive, both to writers and readers, is the personage who deliberately uses unctuous professions of religious feeling or high-toned morality as a cloak for the most thorough-going and unmitigated rascality. Few people may be able to agree with Charles Lamb's paradox that a thief is a very respectable man, but everyone will admit that the hypocrite is—on paper—the most delightful companion in the world. Were Blifil not a fool as well as a rogue he would be as charming as Tom Jones, and Philosopher Square is certainly more entertaining than Mr. Allworthy. Which of us would not rather dispense with a dozen courageous heroes or beautiful heroines than lose the fascinating companionship of Joseph Surface with his maxims and ‘sentiments,’ or of the immortal Mr. Pecksniff with his universal benevolence and overpowering self-abnegation? The scamp of literature is generally more entertaining than the model of all the virtues, whatever be the special character of his scampishness; but in the firmament of rascality one star differs from another star in glory, and the ideal hypocrite is a luminary of the first magnitude. It is easy to see why the Joseph Surfaces and the Pecksniffs of fiction are so universally popular. A broadly humorous conception is always widely appreciated; and as the essence of humour has again and again been said to lie in incongruity, it is natural enough that characters like these, which are a mass of incongruities of an almost farcically obvious type, should at once win, and not only win but retain, the suffrages of the reading world. Another cause for the popularity of this kind of portraiture is found in the direct appeal it makes to our self-esteem. Most readers are sufficiently childlike, or childish—it is unnecessary to decide which—to extract a considerable amount of real gratification from the consciousness that they are so much superior in acuteness to those persons in the play or the novel who are blind enough to be duped by the cunning hypocrite.

We enjoy Joseph Surface because we find him out from the first, and therefore feel ever so much cleverer than his brother Charles, Sir Peter Teazle, and all the other people who never find him out at all until the moment comes when, in the very nature of things, it is impossible that they should be deceived any longer. The same may be said of Mr. Pecksniff or any other of the typical hypocrites of fiction. We exercise our wits upon them, and our wits serve us so well that we come at last to have a feeling resembling affection for the scoundrel whose villanies we have been able so cleverly to unmask, just as a detective might be expected to look with considerable amiability upon the ingenious forger or burglar whose resources have proved unequal to his own.

The representation of any given type of character may, however, be very amusing and enjoyable without being in the least true; and the truthfulness of the ordinary portraits of the hypocrite which are so numerous in the great picture gallery of fiction is, to say the least, doubtful. Our own impression is that the person represented is about as real as the sea-serpent, and that the grounds for believing in his flesh-and-blood existence are about as valid as the so-called proofs for the existence of the much renowned monster of the deep. Imagination is such a protean faculty that the results of its action are frequently mistaken for conclusions sanctioned by reason and facts verified by observation. An acute critic once remarked of Lord Macaulay that he always stated so clearly what he intended to prove that he left his readers with the impression that he had actually proved it. In fact, the credence of most people is gained much more clearly by vivid presentation than by accumulation of evidence. They believe in the sea-serpent because they have been completely conquered by a multiplicity of little details. How can they help believing in it when they have heard how many feet long it is, what is the shape of its head, and know all about the manner in which it propels itself through the water? In like manner, how can they help believing in Mr. Pecksniff when he is put before them so vividly that they would know him anywhere, and can even hear in fancy the tones of his voice as he speaks of the town where he 'takes the liberty to reside,' or expresses a wish to hear the opinion of Mrs. Todgers on the subject of wooden legs?

They cannot help it, and we do not know of any reason why they should try to help it. If we are to get the full measure of possible enjoyment out of any work of art we must submit to the spells of the artistic magician, and for the time agree to accept

as realities the phantoms which flit over his enchanted ground ; but when we have extracted from this acquiescent attitude of mind all the pleasure it is capable of yielding, we may gain another kind of gratification by, so to speak, turning round upon ourselves ; by analysing the sources of our enjoyment, and putting fiction side by side with fact in order to see how much of the delight given by the former consists in its likeness, and how much in its unlikeness, to the latter.

So far as our own observation has gone, we are driven to the conclusion that the hypocrite of fiction is a personage who appears in fiction and nowhere else. To deny that there ever existed such a person as Joseph Surface or Mr. Pecksniff would be injudicious, for the simple reason that we are not acquainted with all the people who have existed, and it is difficult to set a limit either to the moral or the physical freaks of nature ; but it is by no means difficult to prove that such a character is as truly abnormal as the Siamese twins or the ‘two-headed nightingale.’ Of course it can neither be reasonably denied that there is such a vice as hypocrisy, nor affirmed that its manifestations are particularly rare. Hypocrisy is, indeed, unpleasantly common, but it is a very different, a much less amusing, and a much more dangerous quality than the counterfeit presentment which stands as its substitute on the boards of the stage and in the pages of the novel. The one distinguishing peculiarity of the hypocrite of fiction is that he is a conscious and deliberate humbug. He does not believe in his own professions of religion or philanthropy, but adopts them—as the peripatetic card-sharper adopts his rustic garb and his innocent expression—in order to deceive and swindle his neighbours. It is clear that if this be the ordinary type of hypocrisy, the successful hypocrite must be a singularly clever person. He must possess in a high degree a number of qualities which, while singly more or less rare, are in combination hardly to be found anywhere. He must have insight into character, that he may gauge the gullibility of each victim ; he must have wonderful tact to keep him from mistakes as to the best method of approach ; he must, for reasons too obvious to be particularised, have a fine histrionic gift ; and he must, moreover, possess sufficient sympathy with true religious emotion or lofty moral impulse to imitate its manifestations with some decent approach to verisimilitude. A man of this kind would have so many resources that he would be extremely unlikely to tie himself down to the very troublesome plan of making his way by affecting to hold convictions with which he had no sym-

pathy, and conditioning his life by altogether distasteful limitations. The villain in a transpontine melodrama, who is generally as much of a fool as a knave, every now and then exclaims, 'I must dissemble'; but if a clever man were to set himself to dissemble through every hour of his life, he would soon come to the conclusion that the game was not worth the candle.

But the curious thing is that the ordinary hypocrite of fiction is *not* clever. Hardly ever does he exhibit even one of the characteristics just enumerated; and, without troubling ourselves to apply any of the tests given by observation of the real world, this fact is quite sufficient to discredit him. In any assemblage not composed entirely of idiots, Joseph Surface and Mr. Pecksniff would be found out in half an hour, for they have no idea of the most elementary conditions of successful deception. They do not believe in their own professions, and their disbelief is so patent that they are not likely to compel the belief of any intelligent person. The hypocrite of real life is not, save in those rare moments of introspection which usually occur in solitude, a conscious humbug; he does believe in himself and in his own professions, and this is just what makes him so successful and so dangerous. His life is, indeed, spent in two moral worlds which have very little in common, but he is a naturalised citizen of both, and feels as much at home in the one as in the other. When it is discovered that some eminent financier who has lived in the odour of sanctity, taken the chair at religious meetings, and publicly 'engaged in prayer' with much unction, has been for years raising money on forged securities and appropriating to his own purposes the scanty store of the widow and the orphan which has been entrusted to his care, people all at once jump to the conclusion that his speeches and his prayers, his pious phrases and his handsome subscriptions, have been nothing but a series of clever tricks devised with the express purpose of hoodwinking the public. They cannot understand how a man who in the seclusion of his private office concocts a fictitious power of attorney on Monday morning can possibly be sincere in expressing an ardent desire for the propagation of the Gospel on Monday night. That the two actions are morally discordant is of course plain, and the perception of their discordance easily develops into a conviction of their irreconcilability save by the theory of deliberate deception. The conviction is arrived at almost instinctively, which is certainly in its favour; but it is easy to show that it is radically false. That a man's religion, if sincere, ought to affect his moral

action goes without saying ; but that it necessarily *does* affect it is a proposition which can never be proved except by the somewhat illogical process of denying sincerity to every lofty emotion which does not produce lofty moral conduct. As a matter of fact religion and philanthropy may be indulged in quite sincerely as emotional luxuries, and it does not follow that because a man really enjoys a prayer meeting, and is warmly interested in the welfare of savages three thousand miles away, that his whole conduct must be inspired by love for God and for his neighbours. Human life, as it really is, does not possess the symmetry which philosophers and novelists claim for it. It is a thing of shreds and patches, and the patches are very inharmonious both in shape and colour. A fine poetic sensibility or a true feeling for ideal beauty seems inconsistent—and in any mere theoretical statement will be pronounced inconsistent—with coarse tastes and the grosser forms of vice ; but when we come to the world of fact we have to admit that Byron took far too much gin and water, and that Turner never felt more at home than when basking in the smiles of the trulls of Wapping. No one because of these facts ever thinks of denying Byron's poetic insight or Turner's artistic feeling ; but it would be quite as reasonable to deny either as it is to affirm that because a man is no better than he should be in his commercial or social relations his piety is necessarily a deep-laid delusion, and his philanthropy a carefully constructed snare.

The mixed motives and conflicting lines of conduct which characterise the real hypocrite can, however, only be intelligibly portrayed by a writer in whom great powers of analysis and synthesis are combined ; and as this combination is uncommon, and is not needed for the ordinary ends of fiction, the hypocrite of the popular novel is the shallow and absurd scoundrel whose fancy portrait has been so often painted for us. One writer of our day has, indeed, succeeded perfectly in setting before us a credible representation of the genuine article—the hypocrisy of real life. In Mr. Bulstrode, the Middlemarch banker, we see a man who is under the sway of a double set of impulses which, though really discordant, are made to harmonise by sophisms which, because they make him comfortable, he rests in as satisfactory until the fact of their inherent rottenness is forced upon him by the prospect of quickly coming exposure. Only when the course of events compels him to turn round upon himself and regard his life through the eyes of those whom he has wronged, does he really feel that there has been a fatal inconsistency between his pro-

fessions and his practice. The moral blindness, which was none the less real because it had been self-induced, enabled him to serve God and mammon with equal fervour and, in a sense, with equal sincerity. His own success, and the success of the religious and philanthropic causes in which he was interested, had become bound together in his mind by a very simple law of association ; and it was natural enough for him to feel that so useful a servant of God as Nicholas Bulstrode might fairly claim freedom from limitations which had been laid down for the guidance of less active and valuable men. Some people may say that a man of this order is not, in the strict sense of the word, a hypocrite at all ; but this is only because he does not embody the curious ideal which they have evolved partly from their moral consciousness, like the German's camel, and partly from an accumulation of hints derived from the circulating library and the stage. If the Bulstrode course of action be not hypocrisy, it may safely be said that hypocrisy is not a real but an imaginary vice. If in our search for a hypocrite we refuse to be satisfied with anything short of Mr. Pecksniff we may as well abandon the quest at once, for it is certain to be fruitless. We shall find a phoenix or a salamander quite as soon as a reality corresponding to the curious portrait of the conventional hypocrite of ordinary fiction.

JAMES ASHCROFT NOBLE.

Some Economics of Nature.

A MONG the views of living Nature, and indeed of the inorganic universe as well, which receive tacit acceptance and sanction from ordinary thinkers, there are certain phases deemed incontrovertible in their plain every-day demonstration. Before our eyes, for instance, we see *Madre Natura* spending her wherewithal in apparent thriftlessness and woeful waste. The proverb, ‘Waste not, want not,’ so thoroughly and repeatedly dinned into youthful ears, would seem to have no application to the works and ways of the prodigal All-mother that surrounds and encompasses us. The flower that ‘blooms unseen and wastes its sweetness on the desert air,’ is a very mild illustration of a nature-spirit which appeals in more forcible ways to the mind as an example of needless contrivance, wasted effort, and useless prodigality. We fly to Tennyson for that apt quotation concerning the fifty seeds produced, and whereof only one comes to the full fruition of its race. Every summer day shows us how true apparently the poetic axiom holds. Every spring time seems to teach us the same truism. The pines and other cone-bearing trees discharge their pollen or fertilising matter in clouds. The winds, as Nature intends, sweep this pollen from their branches, on the ‘flowers’ of which it has been produced. Carried through the air for miles, so much of the pollen-cloud will fall on the receptive ‘cones,’ fertilise the ovules, and thus convert them into seeds, whence a new dynasty of trees may arise. But countless showers of pollen are spent in vain, irrecoverably lost, and sent abroad to no purpose whatever. They fall on barren ground; they litter the earth miles away from their parent trees, or cover the surface of lakes for miles with a yellow film—their purpose futile and their production vain. True it is, as the botanist will tell us, that more pollen must be produced in the case of wind-fertilised plants than is found in that of insect-impregnated flowers. It is a case of ‘hit or miss’ with the wind-fertilised trees, while it is an illustration of an exact calculated aim with the flowers. Hence Nature has to provide for the contingency

which awaits her efforts in the former instance by providing a very copious supply of pollen. She is in the position here, not of the marksman who takes deliberate aim at the bull's-eye with his rifle and single bullet. Contrariwise, she uses her Gatling gun or her mitrailleuse in the act of fertilising the trees. She showers her bullets at the object in the hope that some of them will hit, and with the equally plain expectation that many must miss altogether. The whole process appears to be wasteful in the extreme—natural affairs notwithstanding ; and the Tennysonian couplet is practically realised when the spectacle of tons of wasted pollen is beheld, discharged as these are at the mercy of any wind that blows, and sent into the air to accomplish haphazard what in other plants is often effected by deliberate and carefully calculated mechanism.

The notion that Nature possesses any system of economics at all might well be questioned by the observer who discerns the apparent waste through which many natural works and ways are carried out. But here, as in the case of so many other phases of life, the two sides of the medal must be carefully studied. It is not the case that Nature is uniformly neglectful of her resources, any more than it is correct to say that she is always saving or perennially economical. Circumstances alter cases in the phases of natural things as in human affairs, and we may readily enough discover that in several instances a very high degree of well-calculated prudence and foresight, speaking in ordinary terms, is exercised in the regulation of the universe of living and non-living things alike.

Take as a broad example of the close adjustment of ways and means to appointed ends the relationship between animals and green plants in the matter of their gaseous food. That the animal form demands for its due sustenance a supply of oxygen gas is, of course, a primary fact of elementary science. Without oxygen, animal life comes to an end. This gas is a necessary part of the animal dietary. It supplies the tinder which kindles life's fuel into a vital blaze, and in other ways it assists not only the building-up but the physiological 'breakdown' of the animal frame. Part of this 'breakdown' or natural waste accompanying all work, like the inevitable shadow, consists of carbonic acid gas. This latter compound is made up of so much carbon and so much oxygen. It arises from the union of these two elements within the body, and is a result of the production of heat, representing, in this way, part of the ashes of the bodily fire. Viewed as an

excretion, as a something to be got rid of, and as a deadly enough element in the animal domain, this carbonic acid is a thorough enemy of animal life. It is not only useless in, but hurtful to, the animal processes. Ventilation is intended as a practical warfare against the carbonic acid we have exhaled from lungs and skin ; and ‘the breath, rebreathed,’ is known to be a source of danger and disease to the animal populations of our globe. Here, however, the system of natural economics appears to step in and to solve in an adequate fashion this question of carbonic acid and its uses. Just as the chemist elaborates his coal-tar colours from the refuse and formerly despised waste products of the gasworks, so Dame Nature contrives a use for the waste carbonic acid of the animal world. She introduces the green plants on the scene as her helpmates and allies in the economical work. Every green leaf we see, is essentially a devourer of carbonic acid gas from the atmosphere. That which the animal gives out, the green plant takes in. Not so your mushrooms and other grovellers of the vegetable kingdom, which, having no green about them, refuse to accept the cast-off products of the animal series, and despise the carbonic acid as a poor but proud relation discards the gift of our old garments. The green plant is the recipient of the animal waste. The leaves drink in the carbonic acid which has been exhaled into the atmosphere by the tribes of animals. They receive it into their microscopic cells, each of which, with its living protoplasm and its *chlorophyll* or green granules, is really a little chemical laboratory devoted to the utilisation of waste products. Therein, the carbonic acid gas is received ; therein, it is dexterously split up, ‘decomposed,’ as chemists would have it, into its original elements, carbon and oxygen ; and therein, is the carbon retained as part of the food of the plant, while the oxygen, liberated from its carbon bonds, is allowed to escape back into the atmosphere, to become once again useful for the purposes of animal life.

There would thus appear to be a continual interchange taking place between the animal and plant worlds—a perpetual utilisation by the latter of the waste products of the former. It is immaterial to this main point in natural economics that the reception of carbonic acid by green plants can only proceed in the presence of light. It is equally immaterial that by night these green plants become like animals, and receive oxygen (an action which, by the way, they also exhibit by day) and emit carbonic acid. These facts do not affect the main point at issue, which is

the direct use by the plant of animal waste, and a very pretty cycle of operations would thus appear to have been established when botanical research showed the interactions to which we have just alluded.

Going a step farther in the same direction, we may find that this utilisation of animal waste is by no means limited to the mere reception and decomposition of carbonic acid gas by green plants. It may be shown that the economical routine of Nature is illustrated in other phases of the common life of the world. The general food of plants is really animal waste. We fructify our fields and gardens with the excretions of the animal world. The ammonia which plants demand for food is supplied by the decay of living material, largely animal in its nature; and even the sordid fungi flourish amid decay, and use up in the system of natural economy many products for which it would be hard or impossible to find any other use. What we, in ordinary language, term 'putrefaction' or 'decay,' is really a process of extermination of the decomposing matter. No sooner does an organism—animal or plant—part with vitality and become as the 'senseless clod,' than thousands of minute organisms—the 'germs' of popular science—make it their habitation and their home. The process of putrefaction, unsavoury as it may be, is really Nature's way of picking the once living body to pieces, of disposing it in the most economical way. So much of it is converted into gas, which, mingling with the air, feeds the green plants as we have noted. So much of the dead frame is slowly rendered into nothingness by the attack of the microscopic plants which are the causes of decomposition. Nature says to these lower organisms, 'There is your food. In nourishing yourselves, accomplish my further work of ridding the earth of yon dead material.' And so much, lastly, of the once living frame—assuming it to have been that of the higher animal—as is of mineral nature, and therefore resists mere decay, will in due time be dissolved away by the rains and moisture, and be carried into the soil, to enter into new and varied combinations in the shape of the minerals which go to feed plants. Shakespeare must surely have possessed some inkling of such a round of natural economics when we find him saying—

Imperial Caesar, dead and turn'd to clay,
May stop a hole to keep the wind away.
Oh, that that earth which kept the world in awe,
Should patch a wall t'expel the winter's flaw !

Continuing the study, we may see yet further glimpses of the great system of general regulation which guards Nature from overdrawing her accounts in connection with the arrangement of living things. Not only in beings of high degree, but in animals of low estate, do we meet with illustrations of the economy of power and the saving of needless expenditure of force and energy which Dame Nature practises. The study of human anatomy, which of course is one in many points with the comparative science as applied to lower life, reveals not a few instructive examples of this saving tendency in life's ways. The human head, for example, is nicely balanced on the spine. Compared with heads of lower type, this equipoise forms a prominent feature of man's estate. The head-mass of dog, horse, or elephant requires to be tied on, as it were, to the spine. Ligaments and muscular arrangements of complex nature perform their part in securing that the front extremity of these forms should be safely adjusted. But in man there is an absence of effort apparent in Nature's ways of securing the desired end. The erect posture, too, is adjusted and arranged for on principles of neat economy. The type of body is the same as in lower life. Humanity appears before us as a modification, an evolution, but in no sense a new creation. Man rises from his 'forelegs'—arms being identical, be it remarked, with the anterior pair of limbs in lower life—and speedily there ensues an adaptation of means to ends, and all in the direction of the economical conversion of the lower to the higher type of being. The head becomes balanced, and not secured, as we have seen, and thus a saving of muscular power is entailed. Adjustments of bones and joints take place, and the muscles of one aspect, say the front, of the body, counterbalance the action of those of the other aspect, the back; and between the two diverging tendencies the erect position is maintained practically without effort. So also, in the petty details of the work Nature has not been unmindful of her 'saving clause.' We see this latter fact illustrated in the disposition of the arrangements of foot and heel. One may legitimately announce that man owes much to his head; but the truth is he owes a great deal of his mental comfort and physical economy to his heels. The heel-bone has become especially prominent in man when compared with lower forms of quadruped life. It projects far behind the mass of foot and leg, and thus forms a stable fulcrum or support, whereon the body may rest. Here, again, economy of ways and means is illustrated. There is no needless strain or active muscular work involved in the main-

tenance of the erect posture in man. It is largely a matter of equipoise, wrought out through a scheme of adaptation which takes saving of power and energy as its central idea.

Physiological research lays bare many other points in human and allied life which bear out the contention and principle that natural economics is a powerful and prevailing reality of life. Muscles are ordered, for example, on the plain principle of single acts and of divided tasks. Thus a man bends his forearm on the upper arm largely by aid of the familiar 'biceps.' This done, the 'biceps' retires from the field of work. The arm is straightened by the action of a different muscle, the 'triceps.' So, also, with the shutting and opening of the hand. While the 'flexors' of the fingers placed on the front palm or surface of the limb close the hand, it is the 'extensors' of the opposite aspect of the forearm (whose sinews we see in the back of the hand) which open or extend our digits. There may be multiplication of organs here, it is true; but, given the original power to produce them, there is a clear economy of vital wear and tear exercised in the avoidance of too onerous tasks being laid upon any one muscle.

It is something of this principle which we find reflected also in the circulation of the blood. Here we see the heart's left ventricle (or larger cavity of the left side) driving blood, as does a force-pump, out into the great system of arteries, which everywhere throughout the body carry the nutrient stream. No sooner, however, has the blood-stream, impelled by the contraction of the muscular walls of the heart's ventricle, passed into the great main artery (the aorta) which arises from the heart, than an economical principle of an important kind comes into play. This principle is represented by the elasticity of the arteries which bear the blood to the body. They possess a circular coating of muscle which diminishes in thickness as the vessels grow smaller and smaller, and are therefore removed from the influence of the pumping-engine of the circulation. The arterial coating is itself elastic, and the whole system of these vessels is thus endowed with a high amount of resiliency. Their internal coats are smooth and shining, as also is the lining of the heart's cavities; friction being thus reduced to its minimum. The united sectional area of the branches of the dividing artery is larger than the same area of its stem, so that the collective capacity of the vessels increases markedly as we pass from the heart outwards to the minuter channels of the circulation.

The blood is thus driven through an elastic set of tubes pre-

senting the least possible resistance to the flow of fluid through them, and economy of power is thus again witnessed in the details of the human estate. Nor is this all. That there exists resistance to the flow of blood is, of course, a necessary condition in any system wherein large tubes or arteries branch out into small tubes (the capillaries), and these, again, unite to form larger or return vessels—the veins. The problem of living Nature would here appear to resolve itself into the inquiry, how the apparently intermittent, or spasmodic, work of the heart may be converted into a constant and continuous action.

If we suppose that a pump drives water through a rigid pipe, we see, in such a case, just as much fluid to issue from the pipe's end as entered it at the stroke of the pump. Practically, also, the escape of the water from the pipe takes place almost simultaneously with its entrance therein. If we place some obstacle or resistance to the free flow through the pipe, while the pump acts as before, the quantity of water expelled will be less, because less fluid enters the pipe. Just as much water will leave the tube as enters it under the two conditions of no resistance and of the presence of such obstacle to the flow. If now we substitute for our rigid pipe an elastic one, the resistance to the water-flow is diminished no doubt, but the fluid will, as before, issue in jets; that is, in an intermittent and not continuous fashion. There is 'easy come and easy go' in the elastic tube, as in the rigid one where no resistance exists. The elasticity, in other words, is not called upon to act in modifying the flow because the course of the fluid is clear and open. Suppose now, that some obstacle or resistance is introduced into the elastic tube. The fluid cannot escape as readily as before, and it tends, as a matter of course, to accumulate on the near or pump side of the obstacle. The tube gives, so to speak, and accommodates the water which is forced to wait its turn for exit. Each stroke of the pump, it is true, sends its quantity into the tube, but between the strokes, the swollen and expanded tubes in virtue of their elasticity act as an aid to the pump, and by exercising their power, force the accumulated fluid past the point of resistance. There is rest in the rigid tube between the pump-strokes. There is, contrariwise, activity in the elastic tube, due to the overcoming by its elasticity of the obstacle to the flow, and to its work of keeping the fluid moving and of avoiding distension and blockage. It is possible, moreover, to conceive of the elastic reaction of the tube being so great that the accumulated fluid will be made to pass the knotty point before

the next stroke of the pump occurs. Let us imagine, lastly, that the strokes succeed one another in rapid succession, and that the elasticity of the tube is powerful enough to overcome the resistance opposing the flow of fluid, and we shall arrive at a state of matters wherein not only will the obstacle become practically non-existent while as much fluid leaves the tube as enters it, but the flow from the far end of the tube will also be converted into a continuous and stable stream.

This latter condition of matters is exactly reproduced in the circulation of the blood. There is great resistance found on the arterial side of the heart. Each impulse has to send blood into a vessel which is elastic in itself, as we have seen; but immediately on the first stroke of the heart succeeds a second. Hence the blood accumulates on the heart's side before that propelled by the first stroke has been completely disposed of. Distension and strain of the vessel succeed, and one of two results must follow. Either the circulating arrangements must collapse, or the elasticity of the tubes into which the blood is being perpetually forced, will acquire power sufficient to overcome the resistance, and to propel onwards the amount of blood with which each stroke of the heart charges the circulation. Here the true meaning of the rapid work of the heart and of the elasticity of the arteries becomes apparent. The otherwise intermittent flow of blood is converted into a continuous stream. The heart keeps the arteries over-distended on the near side of the resistance, while these elastic tubes, so treated, discharge themselves in turn onwards, and at a rate which corresponds to that with which the force-pump action of the heart charges them from behind. And so, tracing the hydraulics of the circulation through its phases, we see, firstly, the heart over-distending the elastic arteries. We witness the arteries emptying themselves into their minute continuations, the capillaries, and through these latter into the veins or return-vessels. The economy is witnessed here in the easy means adapted for converting without complications a spasmodic flow of blood into a continuous stream; insuring also, that the amount of blood which flows from the arteries to the veins during the heart's stroke and pause exactly equals that which enters the circulation at each contraction of the ventricle. In other words, the tremendously high pressure of the arteries of our bodies, saves at once the multiplication of bodily pumping-engines, and conserves the force of the heart itself.

There are other points connected with the circulation, more or less intimately, to which a passing allusion may be made. The low-pressure flow of blood in the veins upwards to the heart from the lower parts of the body is thus favoured by the high pressure of the arterial system, and natural economy of energy is thus again exemplified. The arteries seem to be intent on the work of getting rid of their contents through the capillaries into the veins. There is no resistance, in fact, to the venous flow which is carried on at low pressure. Again, the ordinary muscular movements of the body are utilised in the economy of life, to favour the return of the venous blood. For the veins are compressed in the muscular movements, and, as they are provided with valves which prevent back-flow, the compression can act in one way only —namely, to aid the upward or backward return of blood to the heart's right side.

The overplus of the blood is known as *lymph*, and is gathered from the tissues by vessels known as *absorbents* or *lymphatics*. These return the lymph to the blood-current for future use. Nature 'gathers up the fragments' here as elsewhere, and sees that the lymph or excess of the blood supply is once more garnered into the vital stream of the circulation. If we ask how this lymph-flow is maintained from all parts of the body towards the great vein in the neck where the lymph joins the blood, we again light upon the question of high pressure in one side of matters and low pressure in the other side. All the ordinary movements of our bodies are economically pressed by Nature into the service of the lymph-flow. As in the veins, the valves of the lymphatics prevent backward movement, and as in the veins the muscles compress the vessels, and common movement thus assists a special end. Even the motions of breathing favour the return of the lymph. For when we inspire, the pressure in the great veins becomes negative in character, and lymph is thus capable of being sucked into the circulation from the main tube or duct of the lymph-system. When we 'breathe out' the pressure in the large veins increases it is true, but a valve guards the entrance, which in inspiration is free, and untoward consequences are thus prevented. It is a notable fact that in many animals organs known as lymph-hearts are developed. As in the frog, these contractile organs assist the lymph in its return to the circulation. It therefore becomes of interest to note how in the higher walks of existence, the mechanical contrivances and actions of the body undergo an evolution which not only avoids multiplication of

parts and organs, but also conserves and economises the energy which has to be expended in the maintenance of life.

The function of breathing has been incidentally alluded to in the course of the foregoing remarks, and, in considering the details of this paramount duty of life, we find additional proof of the fact that Nature's economics in higher life are frequently expressed in terms of admirable mechanical contrivance. Primarily, in the case of respiration, we find the bony elements of the chest fitly developed in view of certain physical qualities, of which elasticity forms perhaps the chief. The front wall of the chest is practically composed of cartilage or 'gristle.' The 'costal cartilages,' or those of the ribs, intervene between the upper seven ribs and the 'sternum' or breast-bone. The eighth, ninth, and tenth pairs of ribs also possess cartilages, but these run into and join the gristly extremity of the seventh pair; while the last two pairs of ribs (eleventh and twelfth) spring from the spine behind, but are not attached in front at all. Essentially, the chest is a bony cage, possessed of high elasticity. Even in the dried skeleton, pressure from above, downwards or backwards, applied to the front of the chest shows this quality of its structures in a marked fashion.

If we study, even superficially, the mechanism involved in breathing, we may gain an idea of the keynote of the process in so far as economy of force is concerned. 'Breathing in,' if we reflect upon the nature of the act in our individual persons, is a matter of some trouble. It involves a large amount of labour; it gives us much muscular trouble, so to speak. In the case of a deep inspiration, we exaggerate the effort seen in normal breathing, and we may therefore appreciate still more exactly the expenditure of energy required to carry on this necessary function of vitality. But 'breathing out' is a widely different matter. We let the chest 'go,' as it were, at the close of inspiration, and, without an effort, it returns to its position of rest. We expend force in 'breathing in'; we appear to exert none in 'breathing out.' The former is a muscular act performed by a complex series of muscles, and participated in by the lungs and other structures connected with the chest. The latter is an act which partakes, even to the common understanding, of the nature of a recoil; and in this latter supposition we perceive how economy of labour in the human domain is again subserved.

Breathing, then, means that we enlarge the chest by the

action of certain muscles, that the pressure of air in the lungs becomes reduced as compared with that outside, and that in consequence air rushes into the lungs through the windpipe until an equality of air-pressure inside and outside the lungs is produced. This is the act which is accomplished forcibly, against gravity, and by aid of very considerable muscular power. We are said to perform no less than twenty-one foot tons of work by means of our respiratory muscles in twenty-four hours—that is to say, the work of these muscles, extending over twenty-four hours' period, if gathered into one huge lift, would raise twenty-one tons weight one foot high.

By a little additional muscular labour we take in a deep breath, still further enlarge the chest, and inhale an additional quantity of air. The great muscle named the diaphragm or 'midriff,' which forms the floor of the chest, is the chief agent involved in the act of inspiration. It descends, while the ribs are elevated, and as the chest enlarges, the inflow of air takes place. The lungs themselves are highly elastic bodies. They follow the movements of the chest walls, and thus expand and contract—they suffer dilatation and compression—as the chest walls move in the acts of respiration. But, when ordinary 'breathing out' is studied, we see that it is as clearly a matter of recoil, as has been stated, as 'breathing in' is a matter of exertion. Here elastic reaction steps in to complete the full act of breathing. Nature saves her energies and husbands her strength in this truly physiological division of labour. When we inspire, the lung-substance, elastic in itself, is put on the stretch; the cartilages of ribs and breast-bone are similarly elevated and expanded, and the whole chest is, so to speak, forced into its position of unrest. Then comes the reaction. The muscles of inspiration cease their action; they relax, and the elastic lungs recover themselves and aid in forcing out the air they contain. So, also, when the rib-muscles have come to the end of their tether in elevating these bones, the elastic recoil of the ribs and breast-bone serves to diminish the capacity of the chest, and to further expel the air from within its contained lungs. Laboured or excessive breathing, as most readers know, calls into play extra help from muscles not ordinarily used in natural respiration. This fact takes us out of the normal way of life into the consideration of abnormal or diseased states, and demonstrates that the economy of Nature disappears when phases of morbid action fail to be subserved. In natural breathing, however, we see conservation once more in the easy recoil which

follows the muscular labour of inspiration. The physiology of a sigh and its relief can be readily appreciated on the basis which shows how the easy act of expiration is correlated with the more laboured action and duty of enlarging the chest.

A phase of Nature which is by no means foreign to the foregoing illustration of the conservation of power in the human body is presented to us in several aspects of lower life. In the breathing of certain animal forms, belonging to the *Molluscan* races, we may discover equally admirable examples of economy in natural work. Among the Cephalopods or cuttlefishes we observe such features. Anyone who has seen an octopus resting in its tank in an aquarium, must have been struck by the puffing and blowing movements of the sack-like body, the nature of which excited Victor Hugo's imaginative powers in the 'Toilers of the Sea.' The octopus is seen to inspire and expire with great regularity. The soft body expands and contracts rhythmically enough to excite a natural comparison between its respiratory acts and our own. If we could dye the water so that our eye could follow the currents which the octopus inhales and exhales, we should perceive that at each inspiration the soft body expands, and water is drawn in two currents into the neck-openings. These openings lead directly each into a gill-chamber of the animal. Here, inclosed in its own cavity, we find a plume-like gill. In its nature, this structure is simply a mesh-work of blood-vessels, and thus comes to resemble a lung in its essential features. Impure blood—that is, blood laden with the waste materials of the octopus-body, with the products of the vital wear and tear—is driven into the gill on one side. Subjected to the action of the oxygen gas contained in the water breathed in, the blood is purified. Its waste materials are given forth to the water, and it is passed onwards out of the gill on its way to the heart for re-circulation throughout the cuttlefish-frame.

Breathing in oxygen entangled in the water is, therefore, in the case of the cuttlefish, an analogous act to that seen in higher animals, which inhale oxygen directly from the air. The octopus, however, performs an expiratory act likewise. Placed below the head is a short tube, named in zoological parlance the 'funnel.' When cuttlefish inspiration has come to an end, expiration begins. The body contracts, and the water, which a moment before was drawn into the gill-chambers by the neck-openings, is expelled from the 'funnel.' The openings of entrance are guarded by valves. These close when expiration begins, and the water has

no choice save to find a forcible exit by the tube just named. So far, in octopus existence it would seem as though there was no economy of power exhibited in the act of breathing. Muscular action expands the soft body, and muscular force contracts it. There is exhibited here a plain difference between the octopus and the higher vertebrate.

But the story of cuttlefish economy is not yet completed. A moment more and your octopus, which sat crouched in the bottom of the tank, is seen to wing its way through the water. It skims like a living rocket through the clear medium in which it lives, as if impelled by some marvellous and invisible agency. The secret of this flight is the solution of cuttlefish economy and reserve force. So long as the resting-mood prevails, the water used in breathing is ejected slowly, or at least without any marked display of force. But when locomotion has to be subserved, and when the cuttlefish desires to swim, it propels itself through the water by aid of a veritable hydraulic engine. The effete water from the gills is ejected with force from the funnel, and by the reaction of this *jet d'eau* upon the surrounding medium, the animal is enabled to execute its aquatic flights. Economy of a very rigid order is illustrated clearly enough in octopod existence. The otherwise useless 'breath' of the animal becomes converted into a means of locomotion.

A still closer parallel to the human chest-recoil, perchance, may be found in the case of certain poor relations of the octopus. These lower forms are the mussels, oysters, cockles, clams, and other bivalve shellfish which frequent our own and other coasts of the world. Encased in its shell, a mussel or oyster, all headless as it is, and possessing in its way a strictly 'local habitation,' in that it is a fixture of the coast or sea-depth, presents us with the type of an apparently vegetative life. But there is abundant activity illustrated within the mussel or oyster shell. There are millions of minute living threads—the *cilia* of the naturalist—perpetually waving to and fro as they crowd the surface of the gills. These cilia, acting like so many microscopic brooms, draw in the currents of water necessary for food and breathing, while the same incessant movement which draws in the fresh water circulates it over the gills, and in turn sweeps it out as waste material from the shell. The oyster implanted in its bed, or the mussel attached by its 'byssus' or 'beard' to the rock, exhibits a half-open condition of the shell as its normal state. The animal lives—as may be seen on looking at a tub of oysters

as they lie amid their native element—with the shell unclosed for purposes of nutrition and breathing. If, however, we tap the living oyster or mussel ever so lightly, we find the shell to close with a snap that renders the persuasion of the oyster-knife necessary for its forcible unclosure. In such a case the animal's senses, warned of possible danger by the tap on the shell, communicate to its muscular system a nervous command, resulting in a movement which, as regards the oyster, reminds one of nothing so forcibly as the cry and action of 'shutters up' in a Scotch university town when snow-ball ing begins.

The muscular system of these shell-fish is disposed in simple fashion. Look at the inside of an oyster-shell, and note the thumb-like impression you see occupying a nearly central position. This is the mark of the 'adductor' muscle of the oyster, or that which draws the shells together. The secret of successful oyster opening is simply the knowledge, acquired by much practice, of hitting the exact position of the 'adductor' muscle, and of dividing its fibres with the knife. The enormous power of this muscle to keep the valves in apposition can be appreciated most readily, perhaps, by the amateur 'opener' of these bivalves. In the mussel there are two such 'adductors,' one at either extremity of the shell, and we note the impressions which these structures leave on the shell's interior. The latter animal has thus a double holdfast, whereas the oyster has but a single one. If the function of these structures is thus concerned with the *clôture* aspect of bivalve life, how, it may be asked, is the opening of the shell provided for? This is exactly the point to which Nature directs her energies in arranging her economical disposition of the oyster or mussel constitution. We have seen that the natural and persistent state of oyster life is a condition of unclosure, while the opposite action of shutting the shell is only a transitory and infrequent phase of bivalve existence at the best. There is afforded a chance for the exercise of mechanical expediency in making the open state of the shell a matter of ease and one carried out without effort or exercise of energy. And so is it contrived.

Suppose that, placing two oyster-shells in their natural position, we insert a piece of india-rubber between the valves at the point where they are hinged together. If we now forcibly close the shells by pressure, the india-rubber is compressed. When we release the pressure of our fingers, the elasticity and recoil of the india-rubber forces the valves apart. In such a fashion, then, does Nature provide for the constant maintenance of the unclosed

condition. The 'ligaments' of the shell are natural elastic pads existing at the hinge-line. By their elasticity they keep the valves unclosed. There is no strain involved in the action, which is a merely mechanical one after all. But when the more infrequent act of closure has to be performed, then muscular energy requires to be displayed. The quick snap of the valves reminds us that muscular exertion, even if necessitating vital wear and tear, has its corresponding advantage in the rapidity and effectiveness with which it provides for protection against the entrance of disagreeable or noxious elements into the internal arrangements of oyster or mussel life. There is illustrated here, a clear saving of life-force and a persistent system of vital economics in the substitution of a mechanical for a muscular strain where the maintenance of the open state of the shell is concerned.

Returning to the human domain for a final glance at our subject, there are found in the spheres of digestive nervous actions many facts and examples proving the exercise of a constant economic surveillance of our life. The digestive duty may be defined as that whereby our food is converted into a fluid capable, when added to the blood, of repairing and replenishing that fluid. To this end, as is well known, the nutriment has to pass along the tube known as the digestive system, and to be subjected to the chemical action of the various fluids or secretions which are poured upon it in the course of its transit. In the stomach, for example, certain important food-principles—those of nitrogenous kind—are first selected as it were from the nutriment, chemically altered by the gastric juice, and rendered capable of being absorbed into the system. Instead of waiting for a lengthened period for the arrival of this important part of its commissariat, the body receives such food-elements soon after digestion begins. The fats, starches, and sugars are, on the contrary, passed onwards to be digested in the intestine. They become available for nutrition only after several hours of digestive work. The principle of 'small profits and quick returns'—itself an economical and commercially satisfactory mode of doing business—is illustrated in the digestive transactions of the body. That which is urgently required for the frame is quickly supplied, while the, in one sense, less important foods are left for later absorption.

In this economical work the liver plays an important part. Long ago in physiological history that organ was regarded simply as a bile-making machine. The bile, thrown upon the food just after it leaves the stomach, was regarded as an all-important

digestive fluid. To-day we have entered upon entirely new ideas of the liver's work. As Dr. Brunton has aptly put it, the liver is no more to be regarded as a mere bile-maker than the sole use of an Atlantic liner is to be found in the manufacture and display of the water-jets which issue from the sides of the ship as the waste products of her engine-work. The liver is really a physiological constable placed at the entrance of the blood circulation. Into it are swept digested matters. These are further elaborated and changed so as perfectly to fit them for entrance into the blood. When the functions of the liver are suppressed or rendered inactive, elements of deleterious kind are apparently allowed to enter the circulation, and thus produce all the symptoms of the body poisoning itself. This being so, we begin to see that the bile is really a mere by-result of the liver's work, as the condensed water of the steamer is the consequence of the real function of the vessel. Bile is a waste product, and as such it is discharged into the intestine and thus excreted.

But natural economics rule life's actions here as elsewhere. For the apparently useless bile, nature finds a use. It is discharged upon the food, and mingles with the half-digested nutrient. It has come to exercise a digestive or dissolving action upon fats, a function aptly illustrated by the household use of the 'ox-gall' to remove grease stains in the house-cleaning periods of human existence. Moreover, the bile would appear to aid in promoting the muscular contractions of the intestine, and in thus expediting digestive action. It may possess other duties still; but enough has been said to show that the economy which rules living functions is probably nowhere better illustrated than in the utilisation of bile, as a waste-product, in the normal discharge of the digestive act.

Turning, lastly, to the nervous system and its work, we may find exemplified equally manifest phases of economical action. When we reflect upon the fact that higher life is a tremendously complex matter in its nervous and mental phases alone, we may well be tempted to wonder that we really find time for all the acts involved in the exercise of even our ordinary work. The condition of the brain and nervous apparatus at large might at first sight appear to represent that of an over-worked signal-box at an important railway junction. Questions of commissariat, of threatening danger, of demands for information, of difficulties to be cleared away, are perpetually presenting themselves to the nervous apparatus for solution. Yet it is plain

that many complex acts, the knowledge of which costs us a deal of trouble to acquire in early life, are not only performed correctly in the absence of all that we may name conscious thought or attention, but are discharged the more efficiently because they are so unthinkingly performed. What we term 'automatic' action in human and in lower animal life, is only another name for an economical dispensation of bodily work and of the time that work demands for its performance. Reading and writing do not 'come by nature,' but require to be taught, and from the 'A-B-C' stage of the one, the 'pothooks-and-hangers' stage of the other, both demanding thought and care, we work our way slowly upward to a phase when we neither need to think about our 'p's' and 'q's' in writing or our syllables or sounds in reading. In other words, the intellectual operations of early life have become the 'automatic acts' of adult existence. The immense saving of nerve-power—or at least of the highest powers we may collectively name 'thought'—involved in such an arrangement may readily be understood. We have not even to waste brain-work in the conduct of our steps in walking. We avoid our neighbours and the lamp-posts without concerning ourselves about either. How large a part of our life is automatically ordered, a superficial glance at the history of the nervous system will disclose. The digestion of food, the circulation of the blood, breathing, and many other functions on the due performance and nervous regulation of which the continuity of life depends, are all discharged in this automatic manner.

There is implied herein a large saving of that vital wear and tear of which we have already spoken. Life would indeed be far too short for the safe and satisfactory discharge of the duties of even the humblest life—to say nothing of the performance of merely physical duties of existence—had we to 'mark, learn, and inwardly digest' every act in our daily round of labour. We may grumble as we please at overwork, and criticise rightly the evil effects of overstrain; but we should also bear in mind that the nature we own, has saved us many a worry and many a pang by the exercise of that system of rigid economy which is traceable, in one form or another, in well-nigh every phase of the life universal.

ANDREW WILSON.

An Autumn Holiday.

CHAPTER V.

RECOGNITION.

IT is a fortnight later, now early September, and the day of the Glen Brayne gathering—a day unpromising to the English eye, with drifts of chill grey mist speeding down the valley, and suggestions of coming rain. But what does a Highlander care for that?

There had been the usual rifle competition in the early morning: the conditions—seven shots at two hundred yards, any position. The local volunteers, some of whom had not been altogether unsuccessful with the outside prizes at Wimbledon this July, were sorely put about by the ultimate victory of Sandy, the Strathaven keeper. He had found the spot at the first attempt, and kept on it well throughout. As he pulled trigger for the seventh and last time, and the white disc indicative of the bull's-eye rose up solemnly responsive above the marker's mantlet, that grim and weather-beaten Scot rose up too from his recumbent position in the damp heather, shook the superfluous raindrops off his bonnet, and looked round upon his discomfited neighbours with an almost inaudible ghostly chuckle. Taking a pinch of snuff, and clearing his throat in a harsh and plebeian fashion, he then delivered his soul and lapsed into silence for the rest of that day forward: ‘Aweel, lads, it’s a grand thing, ye ken, to gae flaunting up to Weembledon, and a grand thing to have your expenses paid by the Rife Corpse, I’ll na deny that. But I’m thinking there is a divairisy o’ gifts, as the Scripture says. And as far as the giftie o’ shooting gaes, for a’ the practice at the Weembledon targets, and for a’ the gude conceit o’ yourselfs that the Lord has given ye, ye have but few signs and wonders to exheebit to the lads that bide at hame in the glen.’

But now at noonday the scene has shifted to the games.

Under the slopes of Strondearg, a commanding hill on the left of the river, there is a moderately level grass-grown spot of irregular shape, and with sudden acute-angled corners that would fill the heart of a Lillie Bridge runner with a sense of the liveliest dismay. And here on rocky boulders, grassy knolls, or heathery fringes of the moor, little knots of spectators were collected. Along the road were drawn up a motley assemblage of vehicles, from the trim well-appointed four-in-hand of Sir James Tomline to the honest market gig of Alexander Ker, the grocer from Alyth. Little did the majority heed the chill mist-wreaths or the now rapidly falling rain. The men with rough plaids, the lasses with tartan shawls thrown over their heads, doing double duty for umbrella and cloak, looked on with interest, oblivious to the downpour, at the gaily clad performers on the running path, the dancing platform, or the pipes.

The meeting between Duncan Tomline as he descended from the box seat of the coach and his *soi-disant* stalker was of ‘an extremely affecting description,’ as the provincial press would phrase it.

‘But where are my tenants, Walter? You’ll have to introduce me in due form; for though I have written them heaps of letters, I haven’t seen one of them yet.’

‘They should be here by now,’ said Erskine; ‘but we mustn’t appear too intimate or they’ll spot me. They were telling me they had a friend coming up by the mail last night who is to do wonders with the rifle. But come along, and have a look at Donald Dinnie tossing the caber, he will be worth watching,’ and the two friends turned off arm-in-arm to the scene of action, just as the Roberts’ faction with their visitor of overnight came down the crowd towards them. The visitor was none other than Daunt of Magdalen himself.

Hester was pleased just now to be gently satirical with the new comer, who was quite the haughty and reserved young Englishman, did not feel particularly well after his night journey, and had been bold enough to hazard the remark—‘Seems hardly good enough, going out on a day like this to see a horde of kilted savages disporting themselves on the rugged slopes of a hill. One would be much better indoors with a book.’

‘Not going to the games? Of course I’m going. I have come to the Highlands with a stern set purpose of seeing all that is to be seen. And “savages,” indeed! Why, I am quite prepared to lose my heart to one particular “savage”—Mr. Duncan

Tomline, to wit. Kirstie the housekeeper tells me he has all the manners of the French Court, and puts on most wondrous war-paint on these occasions. Besides, we want to show you our stalker. He is such a nice young man: so aristocratic, too. You must come with us.'

And as Daunt's feelings towards her had long been tender, he needed no more persuasion to abandon the half-formed novel-and-sofa theory.

Chatting pleasantly of her autumn experiences as they made their way on to the ground, Hester did not notice the slight start of surprise her companion gave when he fancied he saw a familiar figure in the crowd immediately before them. And as the two came up to the improvised inclosure, and the cheers that had greeted some particularly great effort of the champion died away, Erskine, with his arm still affectionately linked in Tomline's, who was in the full panoply of Highland dress, turned round from the ring and faced full upon the inquiring countenances of an Oxford friend and Mr. Roberts's daughter. He dropped the young laird's arm as if it had been a red-hot poker, and, even with the tan of three weeks' outing in all weathers upon him, a hot flush of confusion mantled his face with a deeper hue. He sheepishly took off his bonnet to the lady, who was, of course, quite unaware whose arm he had so hastily relinquished, but now saw with a sense of ludicrous astonishment their visitor go straight up and shake her father's keeper most warmly by the hand, with—

'Who ever would have thought of meeting you in this out-of-the-way region? Have you had good sport?'

'God bless my soul!' feebly ejaculated the 'wholesaler,' who, too, was just in time to see his guest of overnight almost embracing the keeper, 'you don't mean to say our stalker is a gentleman after all?'

Words rose to Walter's lips at last. 'Well, Mr. Roberts, and don't I *look* like one?' he coolly said. 'Come, let me introduce my friend here. Miss Roberts, this is Mr. Duncan Tomline, of Langwell, your landlord, and my kind patron and employer.'

Duncan, who had taken in the situation at a glance, was convulsed with laughter at all the confused and puzzled faces round him. The Scotch are popularly supposed to be unable to detect a joke. Perhaps it is that the samples of English wit submitted to their inspection are of but poor quality. The joke here, however, was of too well-marked outline to dumbfounder the Scotch mind, and was enjoyed with the utmost hilarity.

But between shouts of irrepressible laughter he was yet mindful of Highland hospitality. ‘Sir James Tomline wants you all to join our party at lunch. It’s an uncanny day for a picnic out of doors, but that cannot be helped. Come, Erskine, you shall have lunch to-day with the gentry. You will be out of the way of behaving in decent society, I know, but we’ll trust you will soon pick it up again. Pray excuse any little awkwardness in his manners at first, Miss Roberts.’

The lady, despite the dissimulation practised on her family, turned upon him glances that were rather quizzical than hostile. There was a certain romance about his proceedings which she did not object to.

‘Well, Mr. Erskine, I hope you are ashamed of yourself,’ was all she said.

‘Certainly I am. Did you not observe how confusion covered me as with a garment? But I hope I may be forgiven, at any rate.’

And she supposed he might, and smiled on him bewitchingly. Mr. Roberts, as he stood somewhat in the background and gazed ruefully at his stalker, whom he had ‘sat upon’ so angrily the last Saturday, when Erskine had accidentally put deer away without giving him a chance of a shot, was inwardly asking himself how on earth he could have failed to see what a choice young man he had to deal with, but his daughter was not displeased that her own womanly wit had seen what lay hid from the inferior penetration of the male nature.

However, Mr. Roberts did what every good man and husband in difficulties should do, and went in quest of his wife, to impart the latest discovery in these Scotch wilds to her.

‘Hang it all, Maria, the keeper’s a gentleman after all, and I do feel a fool! I wish I hadn’t given it him so freely last Saturday—and he took it like a lamb.’

‘Now, my dear, never mind that. You ask him to dinner to-night, as his friend Mr. Tomline will be with us. That will make it all right. You say you have always got on capitally with him.’

So Mr. Roberts went back, a little comforted, though still muttering and grumbling over his own stupidity.

Walter had none of those *arrière pensées* that Mr. Roberts feared were rankling in his manly bosom. Having been forced by stress of circumstances to emerge suddenly from the chrysalis into the butterfly stage of existence, he was now making as much use of his new liberty as the occasion afforded.

He told Miss Roberts in the frankest manner that he was charmed to meet her now on a level, relieved her of her superfluous wraps, and looked at Daunt with an amiable grin as he stood there shivering under the joint influences of a town life and the dripping weather. Daunt returned his glance suspiciously. Here was a great, hearty, weather-beaten Oxonian, who, despite some mysterious disguises, did not seem to have made a bad impression on his host's daughter, a lady to whom he was himself, in a cool, well-ordered fashion, very partial. Indeed, he had come North with the idea of laboriously fanning this tiny spark into a steady flame rather than from any conviction that his heart was in the Highlands 'a-chasing the deer.' This struggling up steep heathery braes, the long waits among the granite boulders, the rifts of light in a misty day, and the torrents of unexpected rain on a fine one, were none of them dear to his soul.

Now, a nice balmy day in the fall of the year, with the red gold and russet tints of autumn overhead and around him, himself standing fifty yards outside some well-stocked pheasant covert, and the first rustle of distant wings briskly audible in the quiet air, a couple of guns, and a cigarette—that was a very different matter.

And if he did not like the idea of staggering up precipitous hill-faces, through peat-moss and quagmire, with this great healthy animal, Erskine, chuckling over his misadventures on the stalk, still less did he like to see the ready way in which the fair Hester availed herself of the keeper's escort to view the mile race, or to observe the deft manner in which Walter held her umbrella over her, so as to bring the two young faces into most pleasing proximity.

Contrast surely, and not similitude, had brought the two young men into quasi-friendship. From the want of friction in the easy Oxford intercourse it is not hard to be 'hail-fellow-well-met' with men towards whom, in the struggles of real life, there would soon be felt antagonism.

Daunt was cold-blooded, languid, with leanings after an æsthetic ordering of life, and a drawling, affected cynicism, or disbelief in the goodness of poor mortality, that is much affected by the cleverer young men of to-day. His temperament saved him from great vices, but his sentiments, as enunciated to a male audience in the smoking-room, were on occasion worthy of a Tiberius. In conversation, few men object to pose as men of the world who have sucked out the cup of pleasure to the dregs; and for the sake of effect, or a present paradox, your clever conver-

sationalist is ready to say anything, his favourite subject being the relation of the sexes, with new views on the authority of parents and one's duty to one's neighbour.

Mr. Roberts came up doubtfully to Walter again, but was reassured by the friendly twinkle in his eye. ‘We want you to come and dine with us to-night. I hope there's no ill-feeling about last Saturday, lad? You really ought not to have taken in good humdrum folk like myself with traps of this sort. You needn't dress, you know,’ thinking he could not, if he would.

‘No, Mr. Roberts, strong language was almost a necessity of our imperfect existence that day, when you saw those deer speeding off unshot at. I should like to come to dinner, thank you, very much. I'll get myself up as respectably as I can. You will excuse shortcomings.’

But at nightfall, Jeannie Morrison, her face purple with suppressed laughter, ushered in an elegant, if weather-beaten, youth arrayed in all the studied simplicity of evening dress, with a sprig of white heather in his button-hole, and then bolted hastily from the room, cramming her apron into her mouth. A regular groan went round the room at sight of the transformation. His affected unconcern and the brilliant *aplomb* with which he pressed Mrs. Roberts's hand, and, with an artificial society manner, begged leave to express his hope that she was not fearing a chill after the soaking she had endured, were too much for the good manners of all present. A roar of laughter went up from around the peat fire, except from the schoolboys, who gazed at the keeper with eyes of admiring awe that was too real to admit of loud-voiced mirth.

However, by the time the dining-room was reached, the sight of the stalker's high collar and immaculate shirt-front seemed the most natural thing in the world, and under the soothing influences of Scotch broth, fat venison, young grouse and champagne, the party were very gay indeed.

The Lowlanders had actually forgotten to invite Peter to bring his bagpipes outside on so auspicious an occasion, but the omission really mattered little. Flushed by the success of a near relative in the sack race, and more flushed by consequent health-drinking, Peter attended on his own behalf and uninvited. Scarce had the soup been removed, when ‘There is nae luck aboot the hoose’ floated dismally in at the rain-beaten window from the ‘policies,’ growing nearer till it remained stationary, apparently emanating from the front drive.

That dinner remained in all minds as a distinct success, most of all for Erskine. For him there were recollections of sweet, shy, blushing glances that fell again, if accidentally met half-way, of merry, smiling answers to half-jocose, half-complimentary addresses—recollections, too, of a bewitchingly pretty and sympathetic face that blended with his dreams that night and many another.

And for Hester, unconsciously enough, there was the dawn of a new interest, a certain liking for the strong, breezy personality that had come her way. She weighed Daunt in the balance against the new-comer and found him wanting, from his languorous airs and studied effeminacy.

CHAPTER VI.

NATATION.

FOR forty-eight hours after the games the rain fell without ceasing. The wind sobbed and shrieked in the glen, and the river Brayne rolled down in unwonted volume to join the Tay. The pool above the ‘falls,’ wherein, as a rule, a child might safely bathe, was now a threatening spuming flood that overflowed either bank and gathered at the ‘tail’ into one resistless race, as the brown water overleapt the rocks and went madly down the falls.

Always mindful of the day’s sport, Erskine joined the gentlemen as they sat smoking disconsolate pipes in the gun-room, and held up some bait hooks suggestively:

‘I’m not going to ask you to come stalking on a day like this. No doubt the wind is in the right quarter for this ground. But the mist is down to the foot of the valley in Corriemohr and leaves no chance of seeing the deer, while the wind up there is enough to drive a man backwards. But the river is in spate, something like mulligatawny soup. A trout won’t look at a fly to-day, but he has a marvellous keen eye for a worm even in this peaty rush of water. Come out and try them at any rate, it’s better than staying indoors. And the Brayne itself is a sight: I never saw it so swollen before.’

The party caught at the suggestion, for it is not exhilarating to spend a whole day in a Scotch shooting-box, listening to the monotonous roar and splash of wind and rain against the streaming window-panes. So the whole party—including even the ladies—

made for the pool by the falls, and, with half-a-dozen rods out, the banks had the appearance of a small and damp, but intensely interested, fishing competition.

Erskine left Daunt and the younger lads at the head of the pool, and came down to the 'tail' to give his help to Hester, who had the common feminine objection to the handling of lob-worms. Yet, as he came down the riverside with the rush of yeasty waters swirling and foaming over the bank by his feet, some presentiment of danger must have surely flashed across his mind, for he called to the anglers whom he had just left, 'Don't go too near the edge of the water. It is all so thick that one can hardly tell the depth, or where it has come in over the banks. You might get into deep water "unbeknown," if you once begin wading in, and then small chance for you in this flood.'

A few minutes later he was gently chaffing Hester, who, on feeling a vicious tug at her line, had struck with all the force of her two young and vigorous arms, and landed the wormless and troutless hook far up the bank above her head in an unkindly overhanging alder bush, when a wild scream from up the river made them all turn panic-stricken.

The luckless Jimmy had not long profited by the sage warning of his elders. To command a likely-looking still oily eddy he had taken a step or two without mishap through the overflowing water on the bank, and had then essayed to perch upon a rock that just overhung the deep main stream. But he missed his footing on its slippery summit, and, with a wild yell of agonised dismay, that rang high above the deafening roar of the expectant falls below, went headlong into the torrent. Daunt, who was nearest, made one frantic effort to seize his arm as he went over, but then shrank back. The angry rush of waters was not inviting to his sluggish, easy, calculating temperament.

Erskine never hesitated. The old Oxford and public school training, the love for all outdoor pursuits, and excellence therein, all came to his aid in that one supreme moment, and as poor Jimmy, now helplessly splashing and crying for aid, came down in mid-stream, and in the race but ten yards above the fall, Erskine's coat was off, and Erskine himself was with him.

With straining eyes the battle was watched by the distracted knot of spectators on the shore. Walter gripped the almost unconscious lad in an instant, and turned over with a powerful sweep for home. But, strong swimmer as he undeniably was, the space seemed all too scant for ever reaching the bank again

before the water swept him over the falls into the very hell of waters that shrieked below. But with a bulldog tenacity and the British pluck that will not give in till death, he fought blindly through the race somehow, and had the boy still with him as he neared the bank. He made one wild grab at the rocks overhanging the side of the waterfall, and, with a quiet 'God help us now!' missed them, but three or four strong hands laid hold of his receding arm in the same moment, and now, though the force of the water swept his legs round till they actually rested over the fall itself, the danger was over. Those on shore had bushes to hold on by, and there was no fear of having to let go.

Steadying his feet against a submerged rock, Walter gathered all his strength together and jerked Jimmy upwards with the one hand on his collar out of the water into his father's ready arms. And for him, thus freed of encumbrance, the rest was easy. Making full use of the assistance from the bank, he brought one knee up on to the rocks, and with a cheery 'Now, then, a good pull all together!' he was on firm ground again. The whole thing was only a matter of moments, yet two of the party had been at grips with Death.

Pale and dripping, with a thin red stream beginning to trickle down his forehead, where one cruel rock had sharply touched him, Walter could yet have shown to no better advantage to the lady he loved. With streaming eyes and parted lips she took his two hands in hers, but was unable to utter a single word, and it was not till Mr. Roberts spoke that the silence was broken.

'You have given me back my son, lad, and how shall I ever repay so great an obligation? But there, you mustn't stand here like that, with me talking. We can give you a change up at the house, and your forehead must be looked to. You have got an ugly cut.'

And a very silent but deeply thankful procession moved back to the Lodge. Jimmy had swallowed too much peaty water, and was sadly frightened, but revived almost immediately, and was quite able to walk home by Erskine's side. Walter himself could hardly help being conscious of the excellent figure he had made, and soon threw off the serious mood to try and cheer up the others.

'Jimmy, lad, you might say we got on "swimmingly" together. You are far and away the biggest fish that has ever been taken out of the Glen Brayne pools, though lower down they do talk of some monsters. We'll have you weighed when we get in.'

But a dark cloud settled on Daunt's face. No one said anything, but he knew, without need for words, that the other had taken a great opportunity which he had missed, while the chances of a rescue higher up the pool were far greater than when Walter plunged into the white water just above the falls.

At nightfall Hester came out again to Walter, trying to find the words that had failed her before. But little could she say. Only the look of her eyes, and the pressure of her hands, warned him that he was now regarded not as a friend only but a hero, and that he was nearer his new hopes than he had ever believed.

CHAPTER VII.

DECLARATION.

THE rivals were on the hillside together and alone. Daunt had asked to go deer-stalking, not with some unwonted inspiration from Diana the huntress, but with the deliberate intention of having things out with Erskine.

In the last few days he had begun to feel that his affections were more seriously set upon Hester, and less under his own control than he had imagined when he came North. And now that he seemed to be playing the unenviable, if not particularly uncommon, *rôle* of second fiddle, when Hester's smiles and Hester's conversation, since Jimmy's rescue, seemed to be mainly directed to the very responsive Walter, Daunt became conscious of a vague gnawing at his heart-strings that might very well pass for unrequited love, and of an animosity towards Erskine that undeniably had jealousy for its foundation. He had travelled northwards to arrange this *mariage de convenience*, thinking he had only to throw his handkerchief to secure the damsel. Yet here she was, wayward and teasing, to all seeming little inclined to pick up his handkerchief, though, if appearances might be trusted at all, she was by no means insensible to another's wooing. Nay, were Erskine to begin throwing his handkerchief about, there was no saying what might happen. Evidently no time was to be lost.

Mile after mile, then, did he follow the gentleman-keeper upwards, 'o'er moor and fen, o'er crag and torrent,' till his limbs wellnigh failed him. Erskine was maliciously disposed to give his languid and aesthetic follower 'a day of it,' and had made up

his mind that all the highest peaks and roughest corries should be conscientiously explored.

'Hang it all, man!' from Daunt, who, like Homer's heroes, 'trembled as to his faithful knees,' gently does it. There's no particular hurry about those plaguy stags, is there? I really came out to have a bit of a talk with you. It is a difficult subject, and perhaps my best plan is to be open with you, and out with it straight. You will not, of course, be aware that there has long been a tenderness between me and Miss Roberts, and that when I came up to Scotland this autumn it was more with the idea that a time had arrived for divulging the precise nature of my sentiments towards her than with any special predilection for floundering up hills three thousand feet high after iron-jointed, sinewy fellows like yourself, for instance.'

'Well?' said Erskine, as if impatient of such digression.

'Yes, yes; I'm coming to the point fast enough, breathless though I am. And the point is this: You come here under false pretences and work your way into the confidence and friendship of these good people.'

'Yes, I think I have done that,' murmured Erskine, and a reflective smile passed over his face as he thought of the drowning Jimmy and Hester's look afterwards.

'Well, it's very difficult to say what I have to say, but the next question is, Don't you think you are rather poaching on some one else's preserves, not to put too fine a point on it, putting your oar in where you aren't wanted, perhaps?'

But Walter was perverse and would not understand.

'Their manner to me of late has never led me to suppose I was not wanted—rather the contrary.'

'Oh, don't affect not to know what I mean. I suppose I must bring it straight out, though you might have spared me the necessity. Do you think it quite fair to make the running with Miss Roberts in the way you undeniably are doing, when she is, I may say, practically bespoke to another?'

'Oh, come, Daunt, that's a little too much. She is heart-whole enough as far as you are concerned. Why, bless your heart, I've as much right to talk to her and make myself agreeable as you have, and more if I succeed in making myself the more agreeable of the two, as you seem to suggest by your remarks.'

'Well,' said Daunt, who at the best of times abhorred badinage, 'I see you won't take a friendly warning in good part—you persist in your unwelcome attentions to Miss Roberts?'

'Yes, till I know them to be unwelcome. So far I have rather gathered from her artless and unaffected manner that she rather liked them. And now suppose we change the subject, for those brown things right across the corrie there must surely be deer—they seem to be moving. Yes, deer they are, right enough, and good heads among them. So away we go after them.'

Little more was said. Erskine gave the whole of his attention to the approach, and four hours later, when the long patient stalk was over, and the deer were within easy shot, his cup overflowed with ineffable complacency, as did his flask with the primest Glenlivet, for Daunt made no mistakes, his cool temperament never rose to the height of a deer 'fever,' and he took two of the best stags out of the herd, right and left, with the precision of an old hand. But arrived at home once more that evening, Daunt felt no time was to be lost. Would Hester reject his suit for the sake of a rough gamekeeping Oxonian, who had had the luck to pull her brother out of the water, and gave himself out to be somebody on that account?

In action, as well as in speech, Daunt was prim, deliberate, and ceremonious. If a thing had to be done at all, it should be done in a proper and reasonable fashion. Now, in proposing to a lady, even if a man were undoubtedly an eligible *parti*, it appeared to his conventional and methodical nature that he ought to approach the parent in the first place. And now, when matters seemed to him, if not exactly ripe for a declaration, yet likely to lose flavour by non-avowal, he took the recognised and dignified proceeding of requesting a few minutes' private conversation with the paternal Roberts in the smoking-room, which request embarrassed that good gentleman not a little. However, 'Well, my lad, what is it that you have to say to me?' said he.

Daunt, too, was not as much at his ease as he could have wished. He had intended to be straightforward and upright in his dealings, but it did just occur to him that he now succeeded in appearing both pompous and old-fashioned.

However, the die was cast. So after an uneasy endeavour to recover his wonted ease of manner, he began :

'You may or may not have noticed, Mr. Roberts, that for some time past your daughter has been an object of considerable interest to me.'

The father thus appealed to, and desperately resolved not to commit himself to a suggestion that the family had ever thought there was 'anything in it,' merely inclined his head, and so there

followed an awkward pause, Daunt having anticipated a cordial and warm-hearted acquiescence. He seemed to be suddenly suffering from a severely relaxed throat, with all its unpleasant impediments to freedom of speech.

'Well, Mr. Roberts, I feel the time has now come when—when I feel' (conscious of having used the word before)—'I mean, I think I ought to speak to her father, and at any rate receive his sanction as, ahem! a preliminary to paying my addresses to the lady in person. If I have that parental sanction, it will, at any rate, encourage me to hope that my suit may be favourably regarded by the daughter.'

Under his eyelids, Mr. Roberts glanced curiously at the undeniably polite, but somewhat solemn, young man, and his thoughts went swiftly back to the day, now twenty-five years ago, when he had wooed and won his Maria in a somewhat more ardent but successful fashion.

'You know well enough, Daunt,' he said, 'that I can have no objection to you personally as a suitor for my daughter's hand. She is a good girl, and, I think, would make any man happy in her society. But, so far as family and position go, you have a perfect right to address her direct. But now (as Daunt looked disposed to interpolations denying or explanatory), though I don't wish to influence you in the slightest, and certainly shall not try to influence my daughter, do you consider the present moment particularly propitious for your avowal?'

'In the present state of my feelings towards your daughter, I do not see what can be gained by delay. As I have your sanction I shall at once speak to Hester, and must thank you in the meantime for the courtesy with which you have listened to me.' With which sentiment he rose, leaving his host with a slight feeling of cynical amusement which was foreign to his simple nature.

When the night was fine the party generally adjourned after dinner to 'the park and policies' outside, where the men smoked their cigars, and the ladies, well wrapped up in tartan shawls, wandered up and down the pathway. To-night Daunt managed to abstract Hester, and paced beside her.

'Hester,' he began, 'do you know why I came up North?'

'No, I haven't the faintest idea, unless it was that you thought my father's invitation too good to be refused.'

'No, it wasn't that exactly. Of course, your father is kindness itself. But I don't know that I am particularly well qualified for the diversions of a Scotch shooting-box, like that great hulking

Erskine, who seems to have no nerves or sentiment at all.' (Oh, Daunt, Daunt, this was rather too bad !) 'I really came up to see more of you.'

'Dear me ! how good of you !' said Hester, but she was becoming sadly embarrassed. 'And do I improve on acquaintance and proximity ?' she added, smiling ; 'or does distance lend enchantment to the view ?'

'No. I find the witchery of your presence grows ever more fascinating. But now, kindly listen to me seriously for a moment. Your father has been good enough to say he personally has no objection to me. So far, so good. But could I hear you say the same thing, I should indeed be a happy man !'

'Well, Mr. Daunt, your phrases sound rather lukewarm. Personally I have no objection to you either. But I gather rather from your serious attitude than from your words that you want me to profess a deep devotion to you. And, though I am sorry if it should hurt you, I can't do that. I have always liked you, but I cannot say that if I am called upon to love you that I am likely to succeed.'

Daunt's face grew dark. Everything in the world so far had fallen to him pretty easily, and the idea of being thwarted by a young girl whose character he had intended to mould by marriage was exasperating.

'You don't seem to take the matter in a serious light. Perhaps I am not sufficiently explicit. I will endeavour to be more so. I have the honour to make you an offer of my hand and heart, and am sorry if I worded it in such a fashion that you do not know whether you need be in jest or earnest. Of course if you really mean No, I am the last man in the world to annoy you with unwelcome attentions.'

But as she only dropped a satirical curtsey to this last rude speech, he turned on his heel and left her alone in the path. Next morning after this rebuff he departed South in high dudgeon and an equally high dogcart that could be hired in the village.

Walter's wooing was at once less ceremonious and more telling. A few nights after the discomfiture of his rival—a discomfiture which he shrewdly suspected from the abrupt departure—he came down off the hill alone, the other men having driven on ahead in the trap after the day's stalking. As he left the moor he saw two moving figures in front of him, which were Hester and her brother Jimmy, the latter with a fishing-rod. Quicken-ing his pace, he was soon by their side.

'Well, Jimmy, what sport to-day?'

'Pretty well, Mr. Erskine. Three dozen—but all small.'

'Oh, that's not bad at all. We can't all be like Mr. William Black's young ladies, who catch half-a-dozen salmon in a day and think nothing of it. "It is their custom of an afternoon." If you haven't tried this pool beyond, I would try it now. You creep up behind the alder bushes with a big worm, and I'll back you to get that halfpounder we lost one day last week.' Jimmy, still young and enthusiastic, was beguiled by the assumed interest of the gentleman-keeper and scrambled down back to the river. For the rest of the homeward way Walter would have Hester to himself.

'Poor Jimmy! I feel verily guilty. He has such a guileless belief in me that I never would have sent him down there again, only I wanted a few words alone with you.'

'Oh, these men, these men!' thought Hester, this time with real flutterings of heart. 'I wish they would let me alone. It all seems so absurd and unsettling, when I was so quietly happy before. I suppose *he* is going to make a formal offer of his hand and heart now. I do hope he won't be so stiff as his predecessor.'

He didn't seem to intend to be if it could be helped. He looked straight into her face, and was apparently pleased by what he saw there, for a smile came over his own.

'I hope you weren't really angry when you found the keeper was but a "counterfeit presentment."

'Oh, no, not at all—don't allude to it again. Though I'm afraid it never sat like lead upon your soul, this base deception.'

'No; to tell the truth, at first it didn't. But the misgivings began when I had seen you once or twice.'

'Ah! you thought then that I was quite too dreadful, and wished you were free to escape from so unpleasant a position?'

'No, no. How can you say so? But now I'm coming to the point. Which is, that your winning sweetness and pretty ways have filled my heart with an infinite tenderness for you, and for the last fortnight I have seemed to live only in the sunshine of your presence and your smiles. I don't pretend you have given me any encouragement, any right to address you thus. I know nothing of your feelings towards me, I can only speak for my love of you. There, forgive me, Miss Roberts' (for this warm and swift appeal had melted the girl to tears), 'I have said all that I had in my mind to say. Don't distress yourself on my account, for I made you listen to me. I sha'n't bother you later on with

any wails about a broken heart if you don't like to listen. But—but' (here his own strong voice seemed to break and falter) 'if you can give that small dainty hand of yours to a man who is far beneath your own calm sweet purity, and will say that henceforth our two lives shall be but one, why then, God bless you for your confidence in me!' And he half held out his two hands in a suppliant but terribly inviting fashion.

There was a moment's pause as they two stood there in the road. The whole air seemed suddenly still. A water-wagtail that had hitherto gazed on them askance from afar took courage and alighted on the path beside them, jerking and flirting his tail. But a sudden movement made him fly panic-stricken.

The small dainty hand had stolen shyly out to join with his, and the strong arms that had saved her brother were round her directly. Foolish young people, very foolish, you may say, but all the same most absurdly happy.

'And on her lover's arm she leant,
And round her waist she felt it fold,
And forth into the night they went
In that new world which is the old.'

E. LENNOX PEEL.

At the Sign of the Ship.

'WHAT does the People think?' It is a question of the very highest importance in our new Democracy, though perhaps 'What *ought* the People to think?' and 'How are they to be brought to think it?' are questions more important still. Far be it from me to try to solve any of these problems; but the best way, perhaps, to find out what the People is thinking is *not* to go round on the box-seats of omnibuses, and 'pump' the drivers. This, however, is not an uncommon plan among gentry whose minds are inquiring, and whose leisure is considerable. One of those inquisitors lately met a rebuff; for, when he had carefully led up to his favourite topics, the honest driver of the frugal 'bus observed: 'Well, sir, there's two subjects that are too many for me. I just leave them alone—that's Politics and Religion.' We leave them alone, like the driver, in these disjointed chats, and are more concerned to know 'what the People think' about the pictures of the year. Politics apart (would that they could be sent to Saturn with Political Economy, or that they would go where the Services are going!)—politics aside, it is Art that we prattle of mostly in May.

* * *

Everyone but the most belated of country cousins will have seen the Academy and the Grosvenor before these lines can reach the reader. Everyone will have said his or her say, and the Australian cricketers and Ascot will have succeeded to the colloquial place abandoned by sculpture and painting. How are these arts, 'and how do they stand,' especially as compared with literature? To do Painting justice, she is much more flourishing than Poetry, though that is not saying very much. There are young painters of all sorts coming forward; there is Mr. Reid, with plenty of sentiment, and imagination, and force, and with no drawback but a tendency to look at the world through a browny-green glass. How odd it is that so many artists appear

to see the world either through coloured glass or in a tinted mirror ! The French obviously, as a nation, use a mirror, in which ‘a common greyness silvers everything,’ as Andrea del Sarto says. Mr. Ruskin has reproached them with this practice, which the curious may see illustrated in the study of a model in the Grosvenor Gallery, which Mr. Browning calls Joan of Arc. Poor Joan ! she has had no luck. We burned her at Rouen, Chapelain sang of her, Voltaire made an obscene jest of her, and now, behold her in the Grosvenor Gallery, surrounded by a greenish-black landscape ! Mr. Orchardson, again, sees more yellow than the general public is privileged to behold in nature, just as Turner did near the close of his career. Mr. Pettie sees things red, more or less, and Mr. Herbert, as Diderot said of Greuze, finds them dove colour. Leonardo saw things black, and Rembrandt saw them brown, and several painters see more grass-green, a most unpaintable hue, than seems strictly natural. But these peculiarities of vision, illustrating, as they do, the ambiguous nature of the evidence given by the senses, must not withdraw us from a general view of the state of British Art. In addition to Mr. Reid, we find Mr. Corbett suddenly developing a delightful skill in landscape, and Mr. Farquharson displaying versatility and energy, and Mr. Carter rivalling the best portrait-painters, and being rivalled by Mr. Shannon, while Mr. Britten and Mr. Menpes have found nooks of art all their own, and Miss Anna Alma-Tadema demonstrates the hereditary character of genius. Then Mr. Gilbert and Mr. Onslow Ford show that our sculpture need not be content only with Mr. Hamo Thornycroft as a young proficient ; indeed, this art, with very little encouragement, really has revived.

* * *

How happy it would be if Literature displayed equal vitality ! But we look in vain for such a cluster of young men of talent and promise in literature. As to Poetry, who can name a bard under thirty-five (we might put it higher) who is even readable ? Eagerly, with the undying gift of hope, we look through the crowds and multitudes of new volumes of poetry. All the land is barren, from Dan even to Beersheba. Feebleness, platitude, imitation, these things are the main of our staple verse :—of the work that answers in rank to the essays in painting of our least famous artists. Perhaps one exception should be made. There is a tiny book with a very uninviting name, ‘Galeazzo : a Venetian

Episode,' by Percy G. Pinkerton (Venice: F. Ongania. London: Sonnenschein & Co.). It is but a pamphlet of seventy pages, stitched in a white cover. Moreover the book is almost wholly concerned with Venice, which Mr. Pinkerton admires with a devotion like Mr. Ruskin's. This seems poor matter for poems, and yet there is great charm and skill in Mr. Pinkerton's landscapes in rhyme. With two or three sketches in Miss Mary Robinson's tiny volume, 'An Italian Garden' (Fisher Unwin), they are the most pleasant metrical impressions from nature one has seen for a long time. For example, take from 'A Sunset in Venice' these stanzas--

I drift as in a dream
 Down the blue stream
 By oozy beds of weed and shell and slime ;
 And Gigio, when he breaks
 The water, makes
 A lazy sound that fits the silent time.

Or take this, from 'Venice in Autumn'—

Here all is sad, and still, and grey ;
 Wide water-fields around me lie ;
 Cool mirrors that for miles away
 Reflect the pale October sky.

Where at the city's boundary
 Trees crowd and garden bushes spread,
 Wan slanting sunlight fitfully
 Brightens their blots of brown and red.

Or touches, at the ocean-rim
 Afar, some ochre-tinted sail
 Of speeding boat, where Chioggians swim
 Out to the Adriatic gale.

It is like a sketch of Miss Clara Montalba's done into rhyme.

These little things are very good in their way. The right thing, the usual thing, for criticism to do now, is to ask the author for something grand, and moral, and passionate, and human. When he has done his best to please criticism, it is then customary to ask why he does not give us his little Venetian barcarolles, in which he is really accomplished? Every writer in verse who is heard at all is treated in this divertingly consistent manner. Nor is the versifier alone in his misfortune. The notable recipe for all critical writing is to complain of the work

under review, because it is not something else, in which case,—ah *then*, it would be excellent.

* * *

'Enough,' said Rasselas, Prince of Abyssinia, 'thou hast convinced me that no human being can ever be a poet.' Mr. Halford, the author of 'Floating Flies, and how to Dress Them' (Sampson Low), has convinced me that no mortal can ever be a dry fly-fisher. To succeed in this impossible art you have first to find a trout rising at a natural fly. Commonly, if you look close, it is only his *tail* that is rising—the brute is feeding on snails or shrimps, or something of that kind, in the weeds. Now I, for one, need to get very near the trout before I can be sure whether it is his nose or his tail he is popping up. When I get near he resents my curiosity as impertinent, and away he goes like a 'sea-shouldering whale.' But, even when you have spotted the trout, your labours are only beginning. You must mark him down exactly, and then get within reach of him, and then cast a fly over him. 'And when I say a fly,' to parody Thwackum's remarks on Religion, 'I mean a fly that is a good imitation of the insect on the water; and when I say a good imitation, I mean that it must also float, and in a natural position—that is, with its wings up, or "cocked."'¹ All this, and much more, is plainly 'impossible, and not to be done,' so let us return to the good Northern plan of 'chuck and chance it,' wet. The use of the dry fly is a Utopian dream, and as Kennett and Itchen trout won't take a wet fly, let them be anathema. As to dressing flies, Mr. Halford gives the most workmanlike and intelligible instruction, copiously and excellently illustrated, while his coloured plates of flies are capitally executed. But on this topic of fly-dressing I agree with William Gilbert, Gent, in his rare treatise, 'The Angler's Delight' (London: at the Sign of the Peacock, 1676). According to William Gilbert, instead of dressing your own flies, 'You had better go, or send, to the *Three Fishes*, over against the little North-Door of St. Paul's, in London, where you may have them better and cheaper than you can make them.' But if you wish to make your own flies, either for thrift or curiosity, or for pastime in winter, then go, or send, for Mr. Halford's book to Messrs. Sampson Low & Co., in *Fleet Street*, in *London*, a little below *Temple Bar*.

* * *

Speaking of Gilbert's book reminds me of a domestic affliction. The title of the work is printed above, but it has a second part, called 'The Method of Fishing in Hackney River, with the Names of all the best STANDS There, and the manner of Making the best TACKLING to Fish There, or in any Pond, or River, whatsoever.' Now it is my private sorrow that I possess 'The Angler's Delight,' with the title-page of the Hackney River, and the title-page of the Hackney River without the treatise on that subject. This anomalous and imperfect tract is bound in green morocco by Pratt. Has any reader of LONGMAN'S MAGAZINE got the Hackney River tract, with the title-page of 'The Angler's Delight'? If so, a perfect copy may be made out of these scattered fragments, and we can toss for its possession. My copy is marked 'Unique with this title. £8 15.' Unique indeed, but none the more desirable.

* *

The spiritual destitution of the Osages in the Far West is really lamentable. According to Pawnee Bill, who knows them well, they think their dead cannot rest quietly unless a scalp is laid on the grave. When an Osage chief dies, ten or twelve young braves go out 'to get him hair,' and (like the Jews who wanted to kill St. Paul) they take a vow not to eat till they get hair. But the United States has set its fiat against scalping, so these poor Osages are driven to bribe people to let their hair be shorn, without the full and uncomfortable operation of scalping. Here the difficulty begins. People don't mind selling their hair for two or three ponies (not 25*l.*, but actual ponies), but they *do* object to entrusting their head and a sharp knife to a hungry Osage. He might be carried away by his religious emotions, and do the old-fashioned scalp, instead of the ritual survival, the mere hair-cutting business. John M'Laskey lately met Osages who had fasted for five days, and offered three ponies for his hair, but holders were firm, and would not part at the quoted price. They soon pounced on a Pawnee, and shore off his black braids without paying anything. This nearly led to a war between the Osages and the Pawnees. The religious condition of the Osages and their endeavour to do the best they can for the ghosts of their kinsfolk are extremely touching. Would that in our more enlightened sphere we were as conscientious and devoted as the benighted Osages!

* *

After declaiming against the lack of new verse in this late age, it would be highly imprudent for a critic to offer, in this place, any verses of his own. The Persons of Quality, too, that occasionally befriend me with a copy of their effusions have deserted me, and I therefore quote some lines of Lord Tennyson's, which are old enough, but hitherto unpublished. They are variations from the published texts of 'The Talking Oak,' and are printed, for the first time, by Mr. Frederick Locker in his Library Catalogue, whereof only a few copies are in the market. After the line, 'from foot to ankle fine,' in the familiar 'Talking Oak,' come, in a manuscript version in Mr. Locker's possession,—

*Another flickered through the shade,
To dance upon her lap,
The sixth a little glory made
All round the muslin cap.*

The following beautiful and characteristic verse is in the manuscript version of the speech of the Oak :

The woodpecker is kindly bred,
Has often tapt and clung
And hammered with his garnet head,
And kissed me with his tongue.

The 'garnet head' is an excellent example of the Laureate's close observation of nature and felicitous expression.

* * *

The great charm of Mr. Locker's collection, as described in his catalogue, is the number of relics of men of letters which it contains. Even the crowd of Shaksperian quartos, valuable and interesting as they are, can hardly rival the manuscript corrections by authors dead and gone. For example, the first edition of Crashaw's 'Steps to the Temple' (1646) is difficult to get. I once picked up for a shilling, in Holywell Street, a large but imperfect copy which had belonged to Colet, Crashaw's friend, and bore the very odd book-plate of his son. But Mr. Locker's copy contains forty lines of verse in Crashaw's autograph. His Walton, again ('The Compleat Angler,' 1653), is in the 'finest condition,' but is perhaps less curious than his copy of Walton's 'Lives,' with its autograph corrections by the good old man. To take a modern instance, in Owen Meredith's 'Lucile,' on the fly-leaf, is this characteristic note by the late Lord Lytton:— 'From Frederick Locker—the poet of social life—I, an exile

from the land of poetry and a stranger to the social life of London, solicit, on behalf of Owen Meredith, an old place in his library for this volume, and a new place in his acquaintance for its author.' In Landor's poems (1795) is a note to the effect that Landor said he 'rates G. P. R. James quite as high as Scott.' Blind judgment of contemporaries! Mr. Locker has the only complete copy known of the third edition (1679) of the 'Pilgrim's Progress.' But it is said that two copies of the almost vanished first edition were lately purchased at bookstalls for sixpence each. Certainly we should never despair of sport in these dusty coverts if the story be true.

* * *

Is it a fact that bookworms (the reptile, not the student) prefer dark-coloured 'end papers'? A correspondent in Lima, Peru, writes that he lately overhauled some modern books, long shut up, and found, almost in Edgar Poe's words, that 'the play is the tragedy, Book, and the hero—the Conqueror Worm.' The worm begins his attack close to the binding (attracted, doubtless, by the paste), and eats his way through. He prefers dark to light, and unglazed to glazed, papers; yellow glazed papers your worm detests, and books in these end papers had entirely escaped. Unluckily, dark papers are much more agreeable for the eye; yellow glazed papers are unpleasant to see or touch, and the worm is likely to benefit by the coincidence between his tastes and those of men and women. 'To this complexion,' whatever our own, whether we are of the Red, White, Black, or Yellow varieties of humanity, we must all come in the long run, books and bookmen.

ANDREW LANG.

The 'Donna.'

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